

with my absences (mental as well as physical), my tendency to stay up till all hours of the night reading 'just one more chapter' and my concern with a subject – order – about which, I suspect, I suspect, they felt that my knowledge was only academic. I am not sure whether the book is any the better for them being around, but I certainly know that I am.

I have one final acknowledgement I wish to make. My parents, as always, supported me in ways far too numerous to mention throughout the writing of this book. It is, therefore, very difficult still for me to realize that my father, who died in January 1997, will not now be there to read the final version and respond to it in his own inimitable way, as he did with everything I have written from my undergraduate dissertation onwards. There are no words that can express what I owe to him, or how much I miss him. As I came to finish the book there was no doubt that this book must be his. However, among the many things he taught me, one of the most cherished for us both was the value of friendship. Since he always welcomed my friends into his own life, and since he had the chance of getting to know them, I know that the three friends to whom I had intended to dedicate this book will not mind sharing the dedication of this book with him. As always, he would have enjoyed the company.

Several parts of this book have been published (usually in barely recognizable forms) elsewhere. It would be pointless to attempt to detail the borrowings and adaptations so let me simply list the published articles of mine from which I have drawn material for the book:

'Modernism, Postmodernism and International Relations' (with Mark Hoffman), in Joe Doherty *et al.* (ed.), *Postmodernism and the Social Sciences* (London: Macmillan, 1992).

'No Longer a Tournament of Distinctive Knights? Systemic Transition and the Priority of International Order', in Mike Bowker and Robin Brown (eds), *From Cold War to Collapse: Theory and International Politics in the 1980s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

'A City which Sustains all Things? Communitarianism and International Society', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 1992, 21(3): 353–69. Reprinted in a revised form in Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins (eds), *International Society after the Cold War: Anarchy and Order Reconsidered* (London: Macmillan, 1996).

'World Order and the Dilemmas of Liberal Politics', Center for International Studies at the University of Southern California (Working paper No. 4, June 1995).

'On Cosmopolitanism, Constructivism and International Society', *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Internationale Beziehungen*, 1/1996.

'Chlo's Cave: Historical Materialism and the Claims of Substantive Social Theory in World Politics', *Review of International Studies*, 1996, 22: 213–31.

'Negative Dialectic? Two Modes of Critical Theory in World Politics', in Roger Toose and Richard Wynn Jones (eds), *Critical Theory and International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, forthcoming).

I am, of course, grateful to all publishers and editors for permission to reprint.

I should add finally that while all of the good ideas in this book are mine, any mistakes I make are, naturally, the fault of somebody else!

Introduction

International Relations theory and the problem of order

'Conceptions of order ... are always accompanied by the self interpretation of that order as meaningful ... that is about the particular meaning that order has. In this sense, self interpretation is always part ... of the reality of order, of political order, or, as we might say, of history.'

Eric Voeglin

'Theory', in any area of academic enquiry, is almost always a contested term. In the social sciences today, it is perhaps more contested than almost anywhere else. Until relatively recently, however, this was not really true of International Relations.¹ Save for an (alleged) debate between Hedley Bull and Morton Kaplan in the pages of *World Politics* in the mid 1960s, and occasional polemical broadsides like Morgenthau's *Scientific Man versus Power Politics*, the 'great debates' that have supposedly shaped the study of international relations – realism versus idealism, for example, – have been debates *between* 'theories' – in the sense of general world views – rather than debates *about* 'theory' – what kind of theory is most appropriate for the study of international relations.

This is, however, no longer true. Today, debates about what *constitutes* theory as well as debates between different theories dominate the general discussion of international relations² and the two sets of debates are becoming increasingly intertwined. This book will, amongst other things, be concerned to develop an account of how this intertwining is taking place and what its implications are. However, in order to give us something substantive to focus on, I want first to explore what I shall call throughout this book, 'the problem of order'.

Order in the history of political thought

Order is one of the oldest and most discussed topics in political enquiry. From Greek tragedy and philosophy, to Roman conceptions of *Imperium* and *auctoritas*, medieval notions of trusteeship and the complex interrelations of law, power and order, to the natural lawyers of the Renaissance and early modern period and beyond, it was a constant and highly contested theme in political, philosophical and theological reflection. In more recent times, though as we shall see its unity was sundered and it was parcelled out between different disciplines (order in the

natural world for the natural sciences, order in the social world for the moral and political sciences), it retained an important role in political enquiry at least until the mid nineteenth century.³

While 'order' has thus been much studied, it has not, I think, been much studied of late, at least in the moral and political sciences. Partly this is because the topic has tended to fall between the stools that are the disciplines of the modern academy. Understanding topics such as 'order' illustrates why the fragmentation of knowledge in the modern age, inevitable though it undoubtedly is, carries with it problems that we must be sensitive to: political order is a topic that, treated with the depth it should be, cannot be corralled by increasingly narrow specialisms.

However, it is also fair to say that treating 'order' – even political order only – as a whole would require a very substantial work indeed, and would take us a long way into many of those aforementioned disciplines. Such a task is not what I shall attempt here, though my treatment of order will be informed by that wider set of questions. Rather, what I want to do in this book is to view the evolution of the problem of 'political order' in the twentieth century specifically through that area where the question has been chiefly and most interestingly put, to wit, the question of international (or world) 'order' in the 'theory' of international relations.

It is significant, I want to emphasize, that while the most pertinent discussions of the 'problem of order' in the twentieth century have indeed been located in that amorphous, fuzzy and rather ill-defined 'field', usually called International Relations,⁴ the discussions of this topic in the field also show very considerable ambivalence and tension. Part of the overall argument of this book is to suggest why this is the case. However, at this early stage we might just say that, whereas the 'problem' of political order 'within communities' – at least in theory – could be said to have been resolved through the institution of the nation-state (a mistaken belief, in my view, but a plausible and widely held one if one is using the conceptual language of modern Western politics), the very fact of the existence of multiple and often widely diverse 'communities' coupled with the fact of their interactions and interrelations makes the 'problem of order' at the 'international' level inescapable. Accounts of 'international' or 'world' order are the inevitable result as is the fact that accounts of international relations cannot but try and deal with the problem of order.

This is perhaps even truer today when it is at least arguable that the world of international relations is being radicalized beyond recognition by myriad forces: social, political, economic and technological. The catch-all term that is most often used in this context, of course, is 'globalization', and although I shall have little to say about this as a discrete set of phenomena in this book, at least until the last two chapters, the debate it has engendered is never far away from my concerns.

As I remarked in the Preface, my own background is in political theory, and so I think it is important at this point to emphasize that I take political theory to task as well for its neglect of this self-same topic. In a book first published in

1989, on the eve of the revolutionary events that were to shake the world of international relations – and also International Relations – to its foundations, the philosopher Stephen Clark remarked that, in his view, 'the overwhelming practical issue for political philosophers in this present day is to look out for an image of international order that can plausibly claim the loyalties of any sufficient number'.⁵ He went on to say, rightly as I think, that

it is astonishing that political philosophers have had so little to say in this, preferring to debate the nature of welfare rights within the state, redistributive justice within the state, civil disobedience within the state and so on, as though all human kind even lived, of their own will and spirit, in such states and as though the international scene were of no moment and the world itself – by which I do not mean the socio-political world – were not at stake.⁶

Clark went on to cite, in agreement, Kant's famous remark that the problems of 'domestic' political theory – the problems of perfecting a civil constitution – are subordinate to those of 'international' political theory – the problem of law governed relations between communities⁷ – and to emphasize again how central a workable, defensible conception of world order is to this task.

I think Clark (and Kant) were, and are, right. Political theorists and philosophers, at least for the last 150 years, have largely left these questions alone, preferring, as Clark remarks, to debate questions that can (in the academy at least) be safely corralled within the 'boundaries' of the so-called nation-state. I do not think this attempt was ever very well founded; be that as it may, it is certainly coming apart as the seams now. Thus, it is high time that political theory started to think hard about the question of world order.⁸ To do so, however, among its first responsibilities – both intellectually and as a matter of simple courtesy – is to come to terms with the manner in which those thinkers and scholars who have, in varying ways, thought about such questions have addressed it: in other words, it must engage International Relations theory and thus that dialogue forms the heart of this book.

The 'evolution of the problem of order'

Let me start here, however, with a general background sketch of how the problem of order itself might be said to have evolved in political thought. As I said above, 'the problem of order' has an old and distinguished history. However, it would not be true to say that it has remained unchanged throughout that history. Specifically, and for the purposes of the present discussion, I want to suggest that the problem of order has taken a distinctive form in the last 150 years or so, which we might call the problem of order within 'modernity'. This latter term is, of course, a highly contested one, and so I should emphasize that I understand it in a very particular way. Since I have defended this understanding in some detail elsewhere⁹ I will not do so again, but its essence turns on the

distinction between what I term 'modernity as mood' and 'modernity as socio-cultural form'. Simply put, this distinction separates out two ways of conceptualizing 'modernity'. The first consists in a focus on *the way we understand and react* to what is held to be the implications of the modern; it is, in other words, largely a philosophical, theological, ethical and, perhaps, ontological question. The second, by contrast, focuses on particular changes in the material, technological and/or socio-economic realms said to be *constitutive of the modern*.¹⁰

My argument in the earlier book was, amongst other things, that any account of modernity is, in fact, a compendium of both modernity as mood and modernity as socio-cultural form. The central question about discussions of modernity, therefore, is the relation between these two conceptions: which one, so to speak, dominates and how does each relate to the other in any given conception? The ramifications of this view in general do not concern me here, rather it is a way of framing what I take to be the central 'problem of order' for the modern world. The problem of order displays a particular character in the modern world in large part because of the way that a range of particularly influential readings of 'modernity as mood' have been related to certain claims about the development of modernity as socio-cultural form. Its 'modern' character is not, of course, entirely *distinct* from earlier versions of the problem, but it is *distinctive*.¹¹ In this book, it is largely with the 'problem of order in modernity' with which I shall be concerned and specifically with the way this problem has been manifested in the major traditions of political thought concerned with international relations. There are obviously other aspects of the problem of order, equally or even more important in the context of the historical story that might be told about it, that I do not concern myself with here. However, before I can come on to my main theme, I must offer at least a sketch of how I see the 'problem of order' in general evolving in the history of Western thought and practice and what makes it distinctive in modernity. Of course, what follows is – and given my main concern in this volume can only be – a sketch, the barest outline of an otherwise enormously complex and multi-faceted tale,¹² but as with all stories, one must start somewhere.

As with most aspects of the 'Western' tradition of political thought, we start with Classical Greece. As I remarked above, in the classical world 'order' was a much discussed, indeed disputed, term. However, one central theme in classical reflection was the unity of the world and the cosmos. 'Order', in this context, was often seen as the reflection of the unity of the natural world. Natural and 'human' order were in that sense perfectly at one.¹³ In early Christian thought this strand of classical thought was often strongly emphasized with creation and divine providence being substituted for the eternal natural order.¹⁴ Later on, however, the tension between classical and Christian thought became much more prominent. On this reading, 'order' in the sense implied above is impossible because of the fall. Human beings are sinful creatures and cannot attain even temporary virtue without strict control. Both versions are available in the thought of St Augustine, but it is the later, more pessimistic Augustine who becomes most influential on the developing Christian world.¹⁵ For this

Augustine, it is not the promotion of 'order' as the realization of harmony with the natural world that is the business of the secular and spiritual authorities, rather it is the minimizing of instability, disorder and conflict. This is simply because the nature of the fall, as Augustine understood it, made it impossible for human beings to attain such harmony. Human order, such as can be attained, is no longer an integral part of the rational ordering of nature but is, so to speak, a separate part of God's providence located in the human realm of governmental institutions and law.

Such a division has far-reaching consequences for the conception of political order bequeathed to the Latin West. However, before we move on to see precisely how, it is worth pointing out here that, although similar influences were at work in the other repository of Christian thought, Byzantium, the results were rather different. In part because the political and generally socio-economic circumstances of the Greek East compared very favourably with those of the Latin West of Augustine's time, Byzantine reflections on the problem of order tended to offer a 'Greek' face to the world for much longer than in the West. The echo of Greek thinking about order as natural harmony of the human and divine can be found in early Byzantine thought, especially in the work of Eusebius, the Christian theologian and apologist for Constantinian conceptions of kingship. Eusebius's synthesis of Greek and Roman monarchical theory with Christian theology was hugely influential in the early Church, both East and West.¹⁶ For this reason Byzantine political thought contains little overt reflection of the 'problem of order' after Eusebius's time. For the thousand or so years until the Byzantine tradition was finally scattered after the capture of the city by the Ottomans in 1453, the Eusebian tradition, albeit somewhat modified and reinterpreted, remained central. The emperor was seen as an 'incarnate law' (*lex animata, Nomos Embystichos*) sent by God and thus beyond question or reproach. Of course, alternative currents did exist, particularly after the crisis of the eleventh century, but they were largely insignificant. In fact, perhaps the most revealing treatise in Byzantine political thought for the purpose of its working conception of political order is the *De Administrando Imperio* of Constantine Porphyrogenitus.¹⁷ This private manual of statecraft, written by the emperor (Constantine VII) for his son and heir (the later Romanus II) is quite unlike the usual, public advice books for monarchs. It is written in plain language, rather than the rhetorical style favoured by imperial apologists, and it is particularly revealing about how the empire should conduct foreign policy, and on how the empire should view both itself and others. What it reveals is a conception of political order based on a greatly exaggerated Eusebian tradition, not dissimilar in tone to the way much ancient Chinese writing tends to view 'barbarians'. Influential though it became (in particular on Russian ideas of statecraft) it remained a largely disaffiliated conception of political order for the West.¹⁸

There, rather than a reflection of an essentially unitary whole, order became seen as an 'ordering' of groups in society and between societies. As Pope Zacharias had accepted, when acknowledging Pippin III as King of the Franks, such acceptance was necessary that 'order may not be confounded'.¹⁹ Order