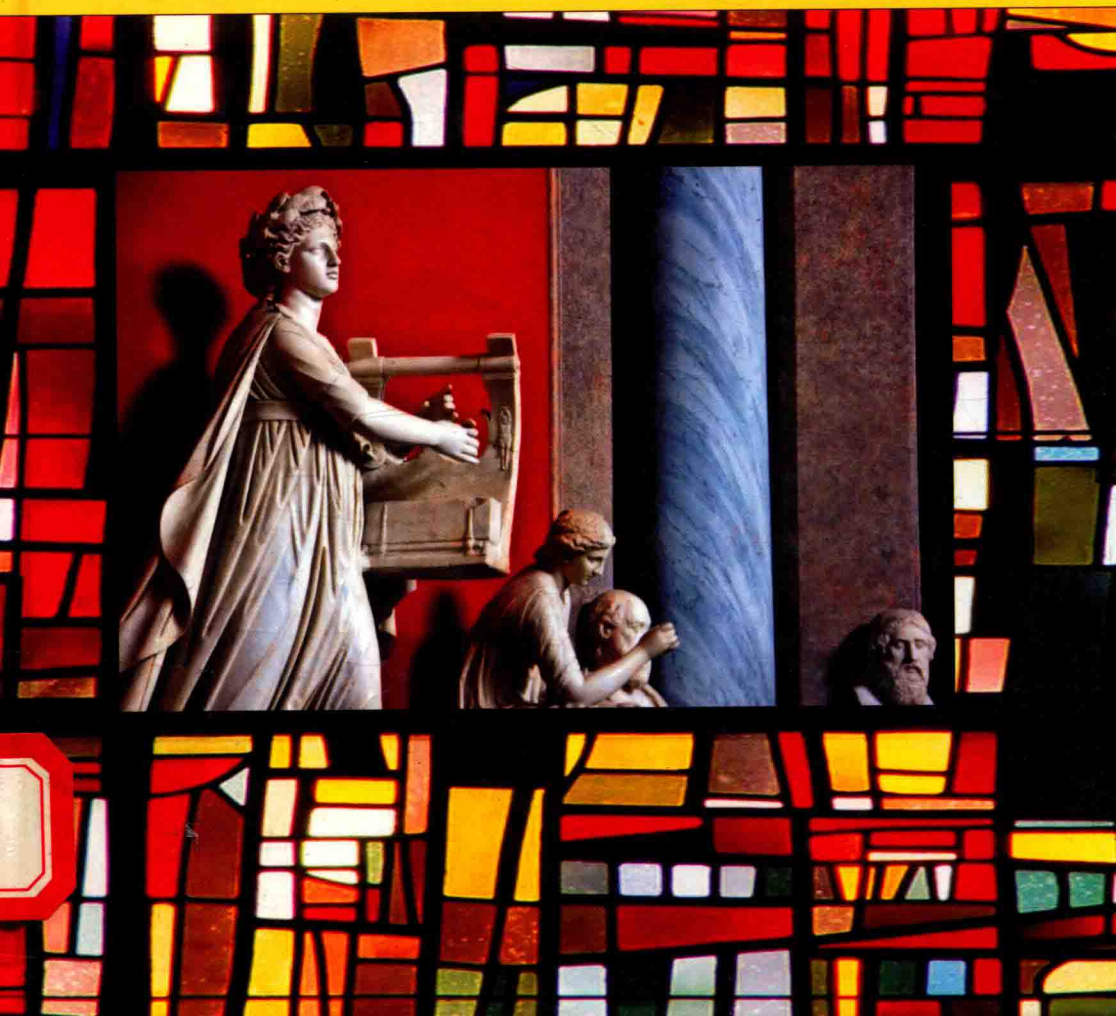


Kostas A. Lavdas  
Dimitris N. Chryssochoou

# A REPUBLIC OF EUROPEANS

Civic Potential in a Liberal Milieu



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**Edward Elgar**

Cheltenham, UK • Northampton, MA, USA

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Published by  
Edward Elgar Publishing Limited  
The Lypiatts  
15 Lansdown Road  
Cheltenham  
Glos GL50 2JA  
UK

Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.  
William Pratt House  
9 Dewey Court  
Northampton  
Massachusetts 01060  
USA

A catalogue record for this book  
is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011924158

ISBN 978 1 84844 221 4

Printed and bound by MPG Books Group, UK

# A Republic of Europeans

To the memory of my father,

*Antonis K. Lavdas*

K. A. L.

To the memory of my grandparents,

*Dimitris and Chryssoula Chryssochoos*

D. N. C.

## About the Authors

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## Preface

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Europe's integrative journey, although still to an 'unknown destination' as Andrew Shonfield put it in the early 1970s, is linked to processes of structural change at multiple levels of human conduct. Its changing routes and conditions have long been part of numerous scholarly efforts to theorize the defining features and evolutionary character of this sometimes smooth, others arduous, but all the same fascinating journey. Is there a possible end-state of the process? Have we reached a point which might be telling of a political finality? Is there a discernible picture as to what the current state of union might look like in the foreseeable future? How does normative theorizing about Europe's transformations help to that end?

In dealing with such issues, while building on our previous work on the subject, this study calls attention to questions of European 'polityhood' and 'demos-hood': the making of a composite but structured political space built around a shared sense of civic identity on the part of diverse but constituent *demoi* – a plural *demos* (not just a collection of multiple *demoi*) composed of politically connected citizen bodies embracing a shared democratic vision: to lay the foundations of a 'Republic of Europeans' in the form of a *res communis Europaeorum* inspired by a rich intellectual tradition of European civic thought. Without attempting to construct a grand theory of integration, the book shall endeavor to project a certain image of the big picture, of the totality which has been achieved thus far – a condition best captured by the term 'organized synarchy' – while also making an effort to complement this imaging of the whole with a possible next step in Europe's normative evolution. As the subtitle of this book suggests, our aim has been to explore civic potential in a context offering opportunities as well as constraints. Attempting to understand the multiplicity of conditions involves the rejection of single-tracked interpretations in favour of an integrating approach. In this book we take the view that the time may in fact be ripe to start looking more closely at the interrelations, the links and the feedback between the normative, the analytic and the empirical. And we choose to focus on civic potentialities as the main lens through which to approach such links. Accordingly, we aim to marry our imaging of the systemic whole and the civic potentialities of today by elaborating on the possible next step in Europe's normative evolution: not the constitution of a new form of *stato*, nor the amalgamation of the component public spheres and civic arenas into a single and undifferentiated public community akin to those found within the

member polities, but rather a democentric process of union inspired by a liberal republican vision of 'many peoples, one demos'; the normative equivalent of a 'Republic of Europeans'. A Republic which hosts, embraces, regulates, and interacts with various forms of pluralism, familiar and nascent, in the context of an organized plurality of distinctive but constituent polities.

K. A. L.

D. N. C.



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# 1. The Global Plurality

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## INTRODUCTION

This book explores the possibilities for a new democratic vision for Europe. As subsequent chapters will make clear, this new democratic vision will aim to flesh out and perhaps redefine normative potentialities without ignoring current institutional antinomies and harsh empirical realities. We begin this journey suggesting that the features of the systemic totality that has been achieved so far represent a condition of ‘organized synarchy’ (Chrysoschoou 2009). Yet this chapter looks at the wider setting within which such a vision might emerge: we cannot strive for a theory of the European Union (EU) as a polity without addressing its placement in the world system and its relation to that system’s ordering principles. Norms of co-operation are crucial in this respect: as they seek to deal with a changing Europe in a fast-moving global environment, actors distil their experience in close and repeated co-operation in order to increase their share of knowledge of and influence over complex conditions of advanced hyper-dependence (Lavdas 2010). In this context, the chapter looks at the way in which global processes and the rules providing their governance are affecting the structural features of the world system in the early twenty-first century. The point is that the global edifice is moving towards an ordered plurality of entwined actors that, despite the anarchical environment in which they operate and evolve, are supportive of the demand for global management through the workings of co-operative systems.

At the same time, the normative legitimacy enjoyed by states to act as ‘the ultimate guardians of the popular interest’ (Taylor 2003, p. 53) is being seriously challenged, if not significantly eroded, by what has been accurately described as the ‘ideological legitimacy of the market’ (Lamy and Laidi 2002, p. 5). Such pressures have not only increased the level of systemic institutionalization (Keohane 1989), but also the search for advanced and innovative ways of sovereignty-sharing which can prove – and, to a considerable extent, have proven – supportive of the need for global arrangements. The result has been a condition of ordered symbiosis among the units of that plurality. In the analysis that follows, a discussion of structural change is taken as an indispensable component of theorizing about the changing norms, conventions, and culture of contemporary global organization as well as about the ways in which the prevailing global changes are related to alterations or transformations in the character of statehood.

## GRASPING THE GLOBAL CONDITION

In a globalizing, if not globalized, world, power becomes widely dispersed and relocated toward multiple loci of authority (Rosenau 1997, pp. 43-4), while informal channels of international conduct and novel forms and courses of collective action acquire greater salience for scholars and practitioners alike. This, in Shaw's (2000, p. 17) terms, takes the form of a 'global revolution' that 'rescues globality from unintended, mechanical change', and 'asserts the role of conscious human agency in global transformation'; 'globality' defined as 'the outcome of the conscious and intentional actions of many individual and collective human actors', and 'global' as *'the quality involved in the worldwide stretching of social relations'*, that is, *'a common consciousness of human society on a world scale'* – 'an increasing awareness of the totality of human social relations as the largest constitutive framework of all relations' (Shaw 2000, pp. 11-2). Shaw (2000, p. 12) explains:

Social relations become global, therefore, when they are significantly and systematically informed by an awareness of the common framework of worldwide human society. Society becomes global when this becomes its dominant, constitutive framework. Awareness of a common framework in human society is not new, of course: this idea has been one of the driving forces of modernity. The distinction between global and pre-global is therefore that, with the development of global relations, the understanding of human relations in a common worldwide frame comes to predominate over other, more partial understandings.

Systemic transformation, however, does not progress through a conscious act of global engineering, let alone reconstitution; namely, through a kind of 'grand design': the new order did not emerge out of concrete plans for a new global architecture, but was rather the outcome of a continuous process of adaptation to new systemic realities (Ifantis 1996). The latter, conditioned by the essential features of the new global system – the higher unit – have brought to the fore basic questions of governance across a wide range of policy domains and 'transovereign' issues that, either by their very nature, or by their cross-border effects, 'move beyond sovereignty and traditional state responses' (Ifantis 2002, p. 105). In doing so, they pose new challenges to the search for a viable global order – 'which consists of those routinized arrangements through which world politics gets from one moment in time to the next' (Rosenau 1992, p. 5) – based on stable and sustainable patterns of authority. All the above have had a profound impact on the nature of states – the units – which no longer assert their authority on the grounds of jurisdictional exclusivity over bounded territories (Held 1996, p. 342; Taylor 2003, p. 54), but rather decide to share it with and within collective systems in order to deal with the emerging global conditions of a late-modern world.

This is a period where the Westphalian amalgam of state/sovereignty is being confronted with new competing amalgams such as state-nation/identity (Bush and Keyman 1997; Ifantis 1996) and, in the light of emerging forms of institutionalized co-determination at the regional level, polity/demos (Lavdas and Chryssochoou 2006). Even as states continue to retain their centrality in the conduct of world affairs, 'sovereignty no longer equates with statehood' (Shaw 2000, p. 228). In other words, states are no longer considered the sole actors in a rapidly expanding and globalizing array of policy, governance and, crucially, knowledge domains, where the once uncontested view of the unity between state and nation is being seriously challenged, if not effectively undermined (Bush and Keyman 1997; Ifantis 1996). But one also has to re-evaluate the ways in which an equally, if more rapidly, evolving world setting – the system – has come to perform its functions as a recognizable or even connected whole, and the extent to which the forces shaping its structures impact on the nature and conduct of world politics.

In response to post-bipolar conditions, and against the background of 'multiple modernities' that tend to relocate 'the major arenas of contestation ... away from the traditional forum of the nation-state to new areas in which different movements and societies continually interact' (Eisenstadt 2000, p. 24), world politics has come alive, evading any static, fixed or predetermined conception of world political order. Today, any systematic attempt to assess the progressive fusion between domestic socio-political arenas and emerging global authorities which increasingly redefines the discourse of governance, or for that matter the dialectics of transformation and affirmation in the new order, requires both an understanding of global fragmentation (Held 1996, p. 341) as well as the identification of common 'grounds' being developed among a plethora of actors operating at the world-systemic level.

Whether applying a positivist methodology to explain why and how power politics behaviour persists among states or adopting a reflectivist or post-positivist epistemology that takes ethics, normative issues and intersubjective interpretations as constitutive of the social world, scholars of world politics are confronted with similar, if not increasingly common, intellectual challenges: what makes for the disciplinary credentials of a dynamic field of study that aspires to explain and understand international conduct and how it relates to both material forces as well as value spheres and ideational factors? What accounts for its generating, evolutionary or consolidating features – the conduct and content of 'periodic great debates' (Puchala, 2003, p. 225) and their assorted twists and turns? In this context, some theorists are interested in projecting a general image of the whole – and, arguably, the 'holes' in it – others link the exercise of power at the unit level with the governance of the global plurality, and still others offer a balanced portrait between the two.

In doing so, they all resort to the domain of theory. Not only because theory matters in some general way, or because it is a means of relating competing worldviews to each other – defined as ‘fundamental lenses through which we interpret the main patterns of “reality” that we then seek to explain, justify or criticize in a more formal sense via empirical or normative theories’ (Griffiths 2007, p. ix) – or even because scholars share in a somewhat mystical or metaphysical manner a propensity to abstract thinking, but because theory matters in certain specific and meaningful ways: *theorein*, to recall Arendt’s (2005) distinction between *via contemplativa* and *via activa*, is the ‘gaze’ that leads to knowledge: more than simply offering ‘an explanation of an event or pattern of behaviour in the “real” world ... by elaborating on why they take place’, (Griffiths 2007, p. viii), theory tells us ‘what possibilities exist for human action and intervention’ (Smith 1996, p. 13). For as Hamlyn (1995, p. 31) notes, ‘one cannot get at reality except from within some system of concepts’. Groom (1990, p. 3) makes the point well:

There is a sense in which one can be pragmatic, but behind every “pragmatic” approach lies a theory of conceptualization – no matter how inchoate. All social activity requires choice and that choice cannot be exercised without some criteria for judgement – in short, a theory, a conception, a framework.

Thus, ‘awareness of theory is a necessary ground-clearing measure’ (Church 1996, p. 8) which ‘intellectualizes perceptions’ (Rosamond 2000, p. 5); it ‘points out how things hang together, what key terms mean and how valid arguments are composed’ (Jørgensen 2010, p. 8). Groom (1990, p. 3) concurs: ‘Theory is an intellectual mapping exercise which tells us where we are now, from where we have come and to where we might go’. Moreover, theory challenges one’s self-made images (Jørgensen 2010, p. 8):

Theory can help improve our analytical competences, especially because theory serves to question or challenge our existing world views ... Knowledge of contending perspectives simply leads us to recognize that our individual image only constitutes part of the full story. In this fashion, we broaden our horizons, and because we can now play more than just one card we expand our analytical competences.

But theory is also a means of linking together abstract intellectual schemes, constructs and theorizations to ‘an apparently random collection of facts that [also] need to be described and studied to discern how they are related’ (Griffiths, 2007, p. viii), or a way of connecting ‘the order of ideas’ to ‘the order of events’ (Unger 1975, pp. 12-6), without, however, the former being merely or necessarily a response to the latter. In sum (Church 1996, p. 9):

Theories have a life of their own related not just to what happens outside but to general intellectual changes, and, especially, to who supports them and why. Political commitment and self interest like academic investment all play a part in keeping theories going in altered circumstances. Hence theories keep re-appearing and debate between them is continuous.

Similarly, international theory – defined as the art of attributing meaning to international conduct, formal or informal, individual or organized, atypical or conventional – is linked to the practice of world politics: the way in which normative assumptions about the world, its defining features, evolutionary properties, ordering principles and forms of conduct are linked to real-life events, ‘why and how events relate to each other’ or ‘how certain facts are connected to other facts’ (Griffiths 2007, p. viii), and how all the above self-inquiring reflections shed light on the constitution of the global condition. It is thus important to stress that theorizing world politics offers an analytical as well as a conceptual platform from which ‘a hierarchy of realities’ might emerge (Taylor 1971, p. 149). In this context, some theorists are interested in the larger picture (the hierarchy, to borrow from the above metaphor); others direct their analytical *foci* at capturing part of the overall image (a particular reality); others call attention to the dynamic interplay of different realities (whether or not such interactions amount to recognizable patterns of co-operative or conflictual behaviour); and others seek to provoke a foundational discourse through the uses of metatheory – of theorizing about theory – concentrating on *a priori* substantive issues and ‘first principles’, developing ‘transcendent perspectives’ (Ritzer 1991, p. 4), and evaluating what counts as ‘important or legitimate questions and answers’ (Wendt 1991, p. 383). In defence of this pluralism of approaches to the study of world politics comes Puchala’s call for ‘edification’ in Rorty’s (1979, p. 361) sense of the term, as elaborated in *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*: ‘human intellectual and spiritual growth arrived at by considering and contrasting constantly new or alternative ways of describing reality’; an insightful inducement to ‘a continuing conversation among discourses’ as well as a call ‘to transforming the study of international relations from a battleground of contending factions into a continuing, and indeed exciting dialogue among intellectuals in better understanding relations among states and peoples’ (Puchala 2003, p. 225).

## SYSTEMIC CHANGE

The defining features of the new multipolar order – its heightening structural complexity, cultural pluriformity, systemic polarity, but also institutionalized activity and transboundary contacts – have not necessarily undermined states’ capacity to adapt and respond to the changing requirements of the day which call for a redefinition of both the nature as well as the political

structures of the emerging global system (Ifantis 1996, p. 9): structural asymmetries aside, and despite the fact that 'policy-makers confront circumstances that are more diffuse, multiple and uncertain than those faced by earlier generations' (Ifantis, 1996, p. 3), multipolarity can also sustain an ordered global plurality which can produce multiple dynamic equilibria. Although still part of an anarchical world order, global actors have engaged themselves in a complex and self-reflective process of redefining their roles and expectations – and, as critical theorists assert, collective identities – giving rise to a new dialectical fusion between competing worldviews (Chryssochoou *et al.* 2003, p. 130).

Thus the new global system, for all its transformative potential, continues to preserve states as its dominant political actors, while placing their security and strategic anxieties within an increasingly accommodationist culture based on patterns of normative interaction through collective negotiation: the epoch-making changes the world has experienced over the last twenty years have increased units' propensity to participate in collective cooperative systems in order to internalize the norms of systemic (structural) change (Lavdas 2002). Hence the need for a critical re-assessment of the forces that alter the relationship between system and units: to identify the nature of the new global order *in tandem* with the implications of systemic change both for the order itself as well as for actors' interests, identity, and behaviour (Smith 1994, p. 24; Chryssochoou *et al.* 2003, pp. 124-5).

The question is whether the internationalization of norms of collective governance and 'diffuse reciprocity' can sustain for any considerable length of time a core set of shared principles to guide the interactions between and among peoples, governments and transnational actors and institutions, including non-governmental and civil society agents operating alongside or even beyond the unit level (Keohane 1989; Lavdas 2010); whether a system of patterned behaviour is possible to emerge, whose functions are to rely on reasonably unambivalent – yet not immune to subjective interpretation – rules of the game. In other words, whether the new multipolar state of play the world has come into is in a position to generate and, in time, consolidate both a sense as well as a political structure of global order guided by common institutions of governance, including social norms and cognitive resources as structural variables which can also steer rule-governed interactions (Checkel 1998; Adler 1997). As changes in patterns of collective action feed into new global movements, novel forms of political community, and advanced modes of co-determination and authority-sharing, their structural impact on the units that lent legitimacy to the new order (Ifantis 2008, p. 119) reveal that these are exciting times for reconceptualizing the world's political structures.

Keeping in mind Jørgensen's (2010, p. 234) point that 'changing times trigger a demand for the development of new theories', scholars of world politics have no reason to complain post-1989, save perhaps for the traditional realists who failed to predict the end of the Cold War (see Gaddis

1992; Kratochwil 1993). As the new global order defies any unicausal form of theorizing, whether of a positivist/neorealist or constructivist/critical epistemological conviction – the former claiming that ‘material structure makes social behaviour involuntary and predictable’, and the latter taking ‘human behaviour and social structure as inseparable, simultaneous, co-constituted’ (Kubáľková, Onuf and Kowart 1998, p. xi) – theorists are faced with the demanding task of accounting for the emergent dialectical tensions between state and global international organization, and how they are shaping the constitution of world society; especially those of its features that aspire to holding it together as a structured and identifiable whole. With the demand for new theories growing stronger in times of structural change, the challenge is to capture the complex interplay between the units and an anarchical but not unstructured system (Ifantis 2008, p. 114) – the ways in which the parts and the whole interact with each other under conditions of globalization, whose profound effects modify the terms of collective symbiosis in an ever polyarchical, but also volatile and turbulent world (Rosenau 1997).

Is it still a world of sovereignty-conscious states acting in their own self-interest? That is to say, a world whereby states remain the highest ordering authority in a perpetually anarchical and antagonistic world environment, and can alone preserve their distinctive values, defend their territorial integrity, and provide for their own security (Taylor 1993, p. 4)? Or are we perhaps witnessing the transcendence of the Westphalian sovereignty regime and, with it, the structural transformation of sovereign statehood? In other words, are states still the dominant actors in world politics, or have we instead entered into a new stage of ‘post-international’ politics (Rosenau 1990), itself a reflection of a wider and, as the theory has it, transformative trend towards a post-statecentric global condition? It all comes down to the question: what causes global change? – especially with regard to ‘its extensiveness or scope, its smooth or abrupt fashion, the degree to which it is patterned, its “spill-over” effect, its pace, the nature and degree of interdependence between the factors conducive to it its “directionality”’ (Frankel 1973, p. 40).

In particular, is change driven by the units of world society, either in the form of self-regulating actors as realists had long asserted, or in the form of agents being constituted by the social world as portrayed by constructivist theorists? Is it provoked only by those forces which are rooted in the system itself and can motivate, legitimize or even regulate state behaviour? Or is it a product of both conditions? Ifantis (2008, p. 114) offers a plausible answer:

One could argue that changes in the nature of the units act as a catalyst for the way in which the system functions as a whole. Put simply, this means that the nature of international relations is being altered: the system changes because and when the physiognomy of the component units changes ... The change in the system’s constituent features has as a result its restructuring.



A related set of questions crucial to the relationship between order and change in world politics has been identified by Rosenau (1992, p. 19):

Does the emergence of a new global order constitute systemic change or change within the system? Is there a difference between changes in the behavioural aspects of actors and changes in the distribution of power among them? Is there likely to a substantial time lag between changes in, say, the ideational dimension and those that occur at the behavioral and institutional levels? ... Is order a cyclical phenomenon such that periods of extensive conflict that foster disorder and chaos are merely transitional moments in history that are soon followed by the establishment of new, more orderly arrangements? Can new global orders be created through political will and imagination, or is their emergence more the result of dynamic technologies, altered socioeconomic conditions, and transformed psychological perspectives that lie beyond human control?

He then argues that, in the absence of any definitive answers, '[m]uch depends on how order and change are conceptualized' (Rosenau 1992, p. 19):

The more the nature of global order is elaborately specified in terms which encompass ideational, behavioural, and institutional phenomena, the greater is the likelihood that the delineation of a collapsed order and the emergence of a new one will be confined to those rare circumstances when the transformative dynamics are viewed as expressive of fundamental decay rather than limited reconstruction, as systemic changes rather than within-system changes, as occurring across long sketches of time rather than precipitously, as too complex to be subject to the political will of a single generation. Furthermore, however order and change may be defined, each transition from an old to a new order may result in a different mix of ideational, behavioral, and institutional dynamics as well as a different combination of underlying technological, socioeconomic, and psychological conditions. Every global order, in other words, flourishes or fails in a specific historical context that cannot be ignored and that even the most elaborate formulation of the order concept must also take into account.

Keeping in mind Shaw's (2000, p. 1) point that 'the processes of change in our time are different from those that, in earlier periods, have made modernity' – hence the 'difficulty of applying previous concepts of change to the new situation' (Shaw 2000, p. 1) – and that, '[a]s in all big transitions, the nature of change is part of the novelty of change' (Shaw 2000, p. 1), contemporary theories tend to confirm that it is not only the cumulative effects of change in the distribution of capabilities across the units which deserve merit, but also the way in which ideational factors remain central to the conduct of normative or reflectivist research (Ruggie 1998) – how ideas, especially new ideas, and discursive constructions and practices influence the allocation of values in world society. A related issue is whether the global system moves towards a politically ordered plurality of interactive