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The English School in retrospect and prospect: Barry Buzan's an introduction to the English School of International Relations: the societal approach

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Review Symposium

The English School in Retrospect and Prospect: Barry Buzan's *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach*

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Introduction by Symposium Editor

Over the last few decades the English School has not only emerged, but has been acknowledged as a distinctive approach to the study of International Relations (IR). It is routinely listed in textbooks and disciplinary surveys as one of IR's primary modes of inquiry, attracting interest and adherents in many parts of the world. This state of affairs is attributable to the work of a number of people, but especially to that of Barry Buzan. More than 'reconvening' the school, a metaphor misleading in some ways, Buzan has led, pushed and challenged his colleagues to better clarify and define their ideas, concepts and theories, as well as to put the English School on a much sounder organizational footing. Buzan's latest book builds on his previous (2004) volume to provide an introduction for readers new to the school. But it does much more than this, providing a 'state of the debate' on such demanding matters as the expansion of international society, and the pluralist-solidarist divide. It also links present research efforts to the classics, putting into perspective and defining the school's current research agenda for the next phase of its development. It has the potential to become a landmark work on a par with the classic work of the early English School, Hedley Bull's *The Anarchical Society*. But how does Buzan's research agenda respond to the requirements of an increasingly diverse and fragmenting discipline? Are his preferred analytical concepts and categories sound? Of what pitfalls should newcomers to the school be made aware? In this symposium five established scholars closely associated with the English School seek to answer these questions, and in dialogue with Buzan, further advance our understanding of the school's 'societal' approach and its

potential for deepening our understanding of what at times appears a highly unsocial world. The approach of the section is 'internal' as opposed to 'external' critique. External critiques of the English School are well known (see e.g. Finnemore, 2001). The section proceeds on the assumption that at this stage of its development the school's approach can be most effectively advanced by vigorous debate between those who share the same broad research agenda with little purpose being served by reiterating the already well known 'external' objections.

The symposium is based on a roundtable discussion held at the EISA conference, Warsaw, September 2013, in which Zhang, Wilson, Navari, and Buzan took part. I am grateful to these contributors as well as to Knudsen and Sharp for their timely and thought-provoking contributions.

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Pluralism, Solidarism and the Yin-Yang of International Society

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Keywords: English School; international society; solidarism; pluralism; primary institutions

An Introduction to the English School of International Relations (hereafter *IESIR*) by Barry Buzan is written in the true spirit of the English School (hereafter ES) theorizing of international relations as ‘a great conversation’. Purporting to provide ‘a comprehensive guide to the English School’s approach to international society that will serve the needs of beginners’ (Buzan, 2014: vii), *IESIR* is purposively framed into historical/structural and normative accounts of the ES approaches to theorizing. This entails a methodological separation of the two accounts of the ES. This is, however, paralleled by Buzan’s attempts at a comprehensive synthesis of the historical/structural and normative thrusts of the ES as a holistic theoretical tradition in his deliberation. Some readers may find Buzan’s elaborations of the normative orientations of the ES (in Part III) also inescapably structural, particularly in his historical and evolutionary account of the rise and demise of primary institutions, whether pluralist or solidarist in nature.

It would hardly escape any careful reader’s attention that *IESIR* is heavily biased towards an account of the normative orientation of the ES, not in the least because the length that *IESIR* devotes to the consideration of the normative side of the ES story. It is also because of Buzan’s declared intention to use this introductory text to intervene in the normative debates between pluralism and solidarism within the ES, which has generated some ‘unnecessary heat’ (Buzan, 2014: 170). In some existing accounts, pluralism and solidarism have been presented as a proverbial and largely mutually exclusive duality in the evolution of international society with a legendary division of ‘pluralist wing’ vis-à-vis ‘a solidarist wing’ within the ES (Bain, 2014: 165; Hurrell, 2014: 147). In other accounts,

pluralism and solidarism are billed as situated 'at the heart of the English School theorizing enterprise', since a vocabulary of pluralism and solidarism has been increasingly used to empirically describe, theoretically explain and normatively evaluate the transformation of international society (Bain, 2014: 167-8). It is clear that recent ES scholarship has invested so much in this debate that the stakes for the protagonists of each side, and more generally for 'the English School's standing as theory' (Buzan, 2014: vii), have never been higher.

Pluralism/Solidarism debate and divide

It is revealing that Buzan frames his discussion of the normative orientations of the ES as 'pluralism and solidarism', not 'pluralism *versus* solidarism'. Buzan's analytical and synthetic narrative of the normative story of the ES is informed by contentions embedded in three interrelated and somewhat entangled facets of the pluralism/solidarism debate/divide within the ES. The first facet concerns the moral dilemma between the pursuit of order and the pursuit of justice in an anarchical international society. Central to the concern of classical ES scholars was how difficult moral questions often arise in the society of states and why from time to time terrible moral choices have to be made. The importance attached to the core values of survival and co-existence of states and the attention paid to pluralist primary institutions such as sovereignty, diplomacy, international law, war and great power management to sustain such social order have led some to conclude that there is a clear preference of order over justice in the classical ES scholarship, particularly in Bull (1977). Such assertions have been hotly contested. The morality of the pluralist order has been passionately defended (Jackson 2000; Mayall 2000), as global international society moves beyond the Cold War context that so conditioned Bull's thinking.

If the classical account of pluralism and solidarism is attributable to Bull (1966), it is in the debates among the postclassical ES scholars that the order/justice juxtaposition has been formalized into the pluralist *versus* solidarist divide about normative changes in the post-Cold War international society. This divide has been deepened by the emergence of human rights culture, and in particular the changing legitimacy, norms and practices of humanitarian intervention, so much so that 'pluralism *versus* solidarism' is sometimes seen as 'one of the principal axes of difference in the English School thinking after the end of the Cold War' (Dunne, 2008: 275). Contestations about the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention underscore such a pluralist/solidarist divide. This is the second facet of the pluralism/solidarism debate, which is perhaps the most contentious and divisive. Each side has staked out a position on a number of important normative questions. Are we living in 'a qualitatively different kind of international society' (Hurrell, 2007: 58)? In descriptive terms, has global international society on balance become more solidarist or does it remain principally pluralist? Normatively, is pluralism still ethically defensible in the post-Cold War world? Is the purported ethical superiority of solidarism superficial or deep? Humanitarian intervention has, therefore, become literally the battleground for the pluralist/solidarist debates in the first decade of the 21st century. As Buzan (2014: 95) notes, while both Robert Jackson and James Mayall 'defend the importance of prudence and responsibility in the practice of statecraft. ... [and] oppose the solidarist project of transforming international society from a practical into a purposive or "enterprise" association', Nicholas Wheeler (2000) asserts that humanitarian intervention has become a legitimate exception to the rules of sovereignty and non-intervention and non-use of force to rectify what Hurrell (2007: 57) calls 'the moral failings of pluralism'.

Much anxiety about the pluralist/solidarist divide in this particular debate rests on the solidarist claim of the moral high ground with the pluralist defence of order being characterized as 'conservative' and the solidarist prioritizing of justice as 'progressive' in the transformation of

international society. While moral-philosophical debates within the ES about the 'pluralist' good of order and toleration and the 'solidarist' concern about justice are healthy, these debates are dangerously slipping into a dichotomous and divisive understanding of pluralism *versus* solidarism as constituting irreconcilable conflicts, oblivious to the fact that the co-evolving relationality of pluralism/solidarism was originally set up by Bull and Wight 'as a debate rather than a taking of mutually exclusive positions' (Buzan, 2014: 93). This co-evolving nature of pluralism and solidarism is again underscored, as 'the intractability of the international system to liberal prescriptions become more evident' in recent years and as the global order has been pushed back 'in a broadly Westphalian direction' (Hurrell, 2014: 161-62), which thrown into question the potentialities of progressive normative transformation of international society in the linear direction that solidarists would prefer.

The third facet of the pluralist/solidarist debate is related to the interplay between international society and world society, 'the push and pull of the ideal and the real', with the moral vision of world society embodying 'the more maximalist ethical ambitions' of the ES tradition (Cochran, 2014: 196). One prevailing assumption is that world society as a human-centric community is inherently solidarist. By the same token, solidarism with its ethically cosmopolitan values could be a 'mid-wife' to world society, whereas pluralism with its emphasis on the minimalist order is integral to the society of states. Such characterization of the contested nature of the relationship between international society and world society has a number of critics. Buzan (2014: 96) notes that John Williams, among others, has made a number of attempts to disentangle the unyielding association of solidarism with world society. Williams (2005: 29) has contended in particular that world society is inherently pluralist, given its primordial ethical diversity, whereas the society of states is at least potentially solidarist because of the intrinsic presence of elements of world society. While democratic peace theory demonstrates the potentiality of inter-state society to be solidarist,

globalization has made it imperative to understand that world society as an empirical phenomenon can be intensely pluralist, not only by virtue of the perennial existence of diversity in ethical systems, worldviews and understandings but also because of the need to respect and protect such diversity.

Institutional account of evolving pluralism and solidarism

Buzan (2014: 85-6) is explicit about a need 'to rescue the pluralist/solidarist debate from the excessive polarization into which it has fallen and to recover the sense from the classical three traditions of the English School that both are always in play'. More specifically, Buzan hopes that clarifying the distinction between cosmopolitan solidarism and state-centric solidarism will help 'remove some unnecessary heat from this debate by making clear that there is more common ground than is at first apparent (Buzan 2014: 170).' Buzan's purpose is to build a bridge between the pluralism/solidarism divide. How does he do this?

It is worth recalling that *IESIR* is not Buzan's first significant intervention in the pluralist/solidarist debate. Over a decade ago, Buzan (2004) made earnest efforts to untangle the aphoristic link between solidarism and liberal cosmopolitan values in an attempt to establish solidarism as 'covering a swath of the spectrum from "pluralism-plus" through Kantianism to the fringes of federation' (Adler, 2005: 174). This particular formulation suggests that pluralism and solidarism are not necessarily two radically different alternatives in the evolution of international society. While lamenting that world society is theoretically underdeveloped and has become 'an analytical dustbin' in some ES works (Buzan, 2004: 44), Buzan also tried to 'transcend a normative conception of world society as representing the becoming of a Kantian cosmopolitan community, thereby making analytical room for non-liberal world societies' (Adler, 2005: 173). The manifested solidarism in global uncivil societies in this instance does not favour any move towards world society of the

Kantian persuasion. World society cannot be normatively grounded only on the liberal conception of the individual. This analytical untangling and structural reading of pluralism/international society and solidarism/world society divide should not be a surprise, as Buzan has been firmly placed in the analytical wing of the ES (Dunne 2008).

The principal purpose of Buzan's intervention, then as now, is not to engage in moral arguments or ethical assessment for or against either. To the extent that Part III of *IESIR* can be read as Buzan's continuing intervention in the pluralist/solidarist debate, three moves are notable. First, Buzan goes out of his way to provide a more detailed and certainly updated historical account of how primary institutions of both pluralist and solidarist characterizations have evolved in constituting transformation of international society. As Buzan (2004: 167) argued a decade ago, a focus on the account of historical evolution of primary institutions is warranted because primary institutions are 'constitutive of actors and their patterns of legitimate activity in relation to each other'. In Chapter 7 and Chapter 9 respectively, Buzan (2014: 113) takes upon himself to provide a 'historical developmental perspective on primary institutions', i.e. to sketch an institutional account of the evolutionary nature of both pluralism and solidarism and their intimate linkage by tracing the rise, demise and changing interpretations and practices of primary institutions and the dynamic processes associated with them.

Buzan (2014: 135) is careful in spelling out, though, that he understands solidarist values 'to mean both bringing world society into play in relation to interstate society and moving interstate society beyond a logic of coexistence into one of cooperation and convergence.' For some, Buzan's historical and institutional account, as it is structured, may prove to be particularly difficult to read in terms of untangling pluralism from solidarism. While it is relatively straightforward to follow Buzan's account

of the demise of dynasticism, imperialism/colonialism and human inequality as institutional practices of pluralism, and to understand his explanation of the rise of the market, democracy, human rights and environmental stewardship as institutional practices of solidarism, they are likely to struggle to figure out why some classical pluralist institutions such as sovereignty and non-intervention, great power management, international law and war can be at once pluralist and solidarist and how to make sense of a significant divestment of liberalism from solidarism in this institutional account. It is however precisely 'the internal revolutions of practices' that these primary institutions have been undergoing (Buzan, 2014: 134) and this tangled linkage between pluralism and solidarism that Buzan intends to highlight. In Buzan's (2014: 87) own words, 'the historical accounts of Chapters 7 and 9 of how primary institutions have evolved are intended as much to unfold the story of the developing structure of international society as they are to illustrate the practical interweaving of pluralism and solidarism'. These accounts are provided in this fashion, therefore, for a specific purpose, i.e. to 'check empirically both how the balance between pluralism and solidarism and the social structure of international society in terms of primary institutions are evolving' (Buzan, 2014: 133).

State-centric solidarism

The second move that Buzan has taken aims at untangling cosmopolitan solidarism in rhetoric from state-centric solidarism in practice. The need to examine 'different types of solidarism' has been acknowledged by Alex Bellamy (2005: 292) and Andrew Hurrell (2007), among others. The latter has noted in particular that there are other forms of solidarism than liberal solidarism, such as The Holy Alliance as 'a reactionary form of state solidarism' and 'an Islamic form of state solidarism' (Hurrell, 2007: 59). Hurrell (2007: 63-65, 2014: 149) also sees the move from consensual solidarism to coercive solidarism as a new feature of liberal solidarism. Buzan's major concern is, however, the unfortunate entanglement of state-centric and cosmopolitan solidarism in the existing literature and

the unnecessary tension such unhelpful entanglement has caused in the pluralist/solidarist debate. Having divested liberalism largely from solidarism in his 2004 work, he is convinced that clarifying the distinction between state-centric solidarism and cosmopolitan solidarism is a fruitful way of further 'untangling many elements of the pluralist/solidarist debate and exposing which tensions are real and which merely rhetorical'. Such untangling is imperative and is conducive to abandoning 'the habit of thinking about pluralist and solidarist orders as representing opposed ideas' (Buzan, 2014: 115).

Such entanglement is attributable, Buzan (2014: 116-19) argues, in part at least, to 'the pluralists' rhetorical tendency to construct solidarism in largely cosmopolitan terms' or in other words, to the presence of solidarism in the pluralist side of the debate as 'the bogeyman that threatens the international order by undermining the sovereignty that underpins the society of states'. This has led to the construction of the view that pluralism and solidarism are irreconcilable and mutually exclusive by Robert Jackson, 'a militant, enthusiast pluralist', among others, taking cues from Bull's notion that a 'cosmopolitan community of individual human beings' represents an alternative ordering principle to a society of states. This classical pluralist bogeyman image of radical cosmopolitanism as represented in solidarism, Buzan (2014: 131-32) maintains, finds little resonance in the mainstream solidarist literature.

Attempts at untangling state-centric solidarism from cosmopolitan solidarism have also led Buzan to offer a rather broad, and arguably too encompassing, definition of solidarism. For Buzan, solidarism in the current pluralist international society is 'about the creation of consensual beliefs across international and world society' (Buzan, 2014: 114). It is about the move beyond the coexistence among states into the realm of cooperation and convergence. Following this understanding,

contemporary international society already contains ‘very substantial elements of solidarism woven through its pluralist framing’ (Buzan, 2014: 130). More crucially, the practical progress towards solidarism of this nature has been made, Buzan (2014: 118) argues, mostly through the society of states, whether one looks at the case of the EU, or ‘around the debates and practices of democratic peace theory, economic liberalism, human rights and environmental stewardship’.

For Buzan then, the site of solidarism is of paramount importance. Buzan’s state-centric solidarism does not insist on human-centric solidarity as a necessary condition and may not even necessarily be liberal in its value orientation. Where does cosmopolitan solidarism stand in relation to this state-centric solidarism? Buzan’s reading is intriguing. Solidarist rhetoric, no doubt, draws upon cosmopolitan values of individual rights and a universal community of humankind. However, ‘under the existing conditions, states necessarily play a key role in implementing and defending cosmopolitan principles’. In short, ‘while cosmopolitan logic is the main moral impetus for the solidarist camp, state-centrism is the dominant practical theme’ (Buzan, 2014: 115). On this reading, Buzan makes one contestable claim, i.e. while the solidarist literature of the ES ‘may be motivated by an underlying cosmopolitanism, in practice it is almost all about state-centric solidarism’ (Buzan, 2014: 132). This inherent unity between cosmopolitan solidarism and state-centric solidarism, Buzan (2014: 127) asserts, even finds strong expression in Wheeler (2000), for ‘although it is fair to say that Wheeler draws his normative force from cosmopolitan solidarism, his empirical analysis and policy prescriptions are firmly rooted in state-centric solidarism. He wants the state to take more responsibility to “save strangers”’.

Buzan’s claim that states play an indispensable role in promoting solidarist values and in moving the society of state beyond pure co-existence finds strong resonance in Dunne and Hurrell. Dunne

(2008: 279) seems to have lent his support to Buzan's notion of state-centric solidarism, when he observes that 'the development of world society institutions is dependent on the ideational and material support of core states in international society'. Hurrell (2007: 75) is explicit that 'the dense institutional core that formed the heart of really-existing liberal solidarism in the post-1945 period was intimately connected with the relationship that linked the United States with its Cold War allies and partners in the Greater West'. Reflecting upon the development of human rights regimes in the post-1945 period, Hurrell (2007: 149) suggests that 'the road to common humanity lies through national sovereignty', since international human rights regimes have affected political actors 'primarily on an interstate level and in terms of dynamics of the interstate system.' The crucial difference, though, is that whereas Buzan is keen to locate the evolving solidarism empirically and firmly in the society of states as it has practically developed, Hurrell and Dunne are more interested in whether the normative ambition of global international society informed by liberal cosmopolitan values is moving pluralist international society to and beyond the point of no return.

The Yin-Yang of international society

Buzan is scathingly critical of the perspective that regards pluralism and solidarism as alternative social forms of order, which are mutually exclusive in the evolution of international society.

Pluralism and solidarism, he insists, are not 'separate, zero-sum positions', but 'are two sides of an ongoing, and permanent, tension of the subject matter in International Relations around which the normative and structural debates of the English School are organized' (Buzan, 2014: 86). They are 'interlinked sides in an ongoing debate about the moral construction of international order' (Buzan, 2014: 113). His analysis of the normative orientations of the ES focuses therefore on the linkage between pluralism and solidarism, with emphasis on their relationality rather than on their duality. In his words, 'order/justice and pluralism/solidarism have yin/yang qualities in which each is a

necessary presence in the other' (Buzan, 2014: 84), as 'Yin and Yang never stand alone (Buzan, 2014: 86).' This is third move that Buzan takes to intervene in the pluralist/solidarist debate.

Placing pluralism and solidarism in *yin-yang* relationality highlights the complicities that bind these two seemingly intractable opposites. Buzan's assertion that solidarism can thrive in a state-centric international society, and his argument that despite its state-centrism, 'there is also some place in pluralism for the great society of humankind' (Buzan, 2014: 91) aim to show the co-implications of pluralism and solidarism as a particular social-relational dialectic in the evolution of international society. There is, in other words, some generative unity between the two. They are not only interdependent and interwoven, but also co-evolving and co-implicated.

In Chinese philosophy, yin-yang is 'a mode of thought which allows for infinite permutation' (Schwartz, 1985: 366). Yin and yang 'co-create, co-govern, and co-exercise power', as they have equal valence (Ling, 2013: 560). As heuristics, yin-yang are helpful in 'surfacing complicities within conflicts, as well as contradictions within complementarities', thus identifying sources of imminent change and transformation (Ling, 2013: 563). Mapping yin-yang thinking onto the understanding of pluralism/solidarism debate, the question is no longer how to reconcile tensions and contradictions between the two, but rather how various strengths and weaknesses defining the relationship between pluralism and solidarism can be balanced to maximum effect, and when that relationship can be most productive and harmonious, leaving moral possibilities open in any given historical and social context. In Buzan's (2014: 170) words, it is about 'thinking normatively about the endlessly unfolding and changing problematique of how to get the best mix of order and justice under any given circumstances'. Through yin-yang co-evolving dialectical reasoning, not only 'the voices of pluralism and solidarism have always been fully audible throughout the history of international

society' (Bain, 2014: 166); but also pluralism is historically *yang*, i.e. morally progressive, and universalism, *yin*, i.e. morally conservative and politically reactionary in the evolution of international society. This is best illustrated by the establishment of the Westphalian system with the absolutist territorial state, dynastic diplomacy, and reliance on natural law, which was meant to undermine the universal political authority of the Papacy.

How effective, then, are the three moves made by Buzan discussed above in rescuing the pluralist/solidarist debate from the excessive polarization and in removing the unnecessary heat in this debate? The introduction of yin-yang as a mode of thought in understanding the relationality between pluralism and solidarism in the evolution of international society has certainly created some space for wider debate. Buzan's elaboration of state-centric solidarism as 'some real evolution of international society towards more solidarist practices and institutions' and his juxtaposition of state-centric and cosmopolitan solidarism (Buzan, 2014: 113-120) may prove controversial and purposively provocative in the ongoing debates and emerging research agendas for the ES. As Buzan (2014: 169) acknowledges, the pluralist/solidarist debate is 'the normative heart of the English School's conversation'. If Randall Collins (1998: 1) is right that 'intellectual life is first of all conflict and disagreement' and that 'conflict is the energy source of intellectual life, and conflict is limited by itself', the pluralist/solidarist debate is likely to remain at the centre of disagreement among ES scholars. For this very reason, it will also be at the forefront of the ES pursuit in producing creative and imaginative scholarship in future.

Solidarism, Pluralism and Fundamental Institutional Change

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Keywords: English School; solidarism; pluralism; fundamental institutions

Barry Buzan has written a splendid introduction to the English School as a theoretical approach to the study of international relations. It presents the general theory of international society and many of its tools in a way that is accessible and stimulating to students and scholars alike. This goes for the refined theoretical vocabulary, the eclectic but self-confident presentation of English School methodologies, the clear explanation of the difficult discipline of comparative historical states systems, the refreshing analytical approach to the key distinction between pluralist and solidarist ways of organizing international affairs, and the dynamic presentation of what the school sees as historically developed 'fundamental' or 'primary' institutions.

What makes Buzan's introduction particularly attractive is the space it opens up for further theoretical reflection and development. As a contribution to such further innovation this review will discuss two questions: First, how can primary institutions be open for change and yet continue to serve as pillars of modern international society? Second, what are the limits to solidarist international change?

Fundamental Institutional Change

The notion of 'primary institutions' is a cornerstone in Buzan's introduction to the English School as it was in his first comprehensive (2004) statement on English School theory. This is very much in line with the tradition. In their theory of international society, Martin Wight (1977: 129-152; 1978: 105-

112), Hedley Bull (1977), Adam Watson (2009), Alan James (1973; 1978; 1986) among other classical exponents of the English School stressed the importance of what they thought of as the 'fundamental' or 'basic' institutions of international society. More precisely, they referred to mutual recognition of sovereignty, the balance of power, diplomacy, international law, great-power management and (regulated) war (among others) as bases of meaningful interaction: institutions as sets of 'habits and practices shaped towards the realisation of common goals' (Bull, 1977: 74; see also Suganami, 1983; Keohane, 1988; Wendt and Duvall, 1989; Evans and Wilson, 1992; Wæver, 1998). They traced these institutions a long way back in history and their works strongly implied that without them, there would not be an international society or at least it would be a significantly different one.

In ontological terms, such institutions are intersubjective understandings laid down in shared principles and practices which are constitutive of international order and international society as such. The relationship between state actors and primary institutions is mutually constitutive: Primary institutions are produced and reproduced by states over time; states participate in social and orderly interaction as sovereign actors with rights and duties on the basis of primary institutions. This is a logic of structuration (Wendt and Duval, 1989). Buzan (2014: 17) captures the durable and fundamental nature of primary institutions and their ontological status well with the argument that they are 'constitutive of both states and international society in that they define not only the basic character of states but also their patterns of legitimate behavior in relations to each other, as well as the criteria for membership of international society'. At the same time his introduction to the school contains examples of fundamental institutional change, both historical and current. So, primary institutions can be subject to substantial change while they continue to function as bases of modern international society. This is a more precise and refined

conceptualization of primary institutions than earlier ones. But it also calls for further discussion and inquiry.

Firstly, Buzan's reconceptualization raises the question of the relative permanence of primary institutions. The argument that such institutions are durable, but not fixed (cf. also Buzan, 2004: 181), is convincing and in line with earlier work, e.g. on the changing practices of the balance of power over time (Wight, 1977, 1978). Likewise, Bull (1977: xiv) argued that the absence of the UN would not mean the end of more fundamental institutions, though it would change their working or operation. In terms of fundamental institutional change Bull's, and in some places also Wight's, focus seem to be on the changing practices of primary institutions whereas Buzan's (2004; 2014), Holsti's (2004) and in some cases also Wight's, goes further to include the possible disappearance of them as in the case of colonialism.

However, institutions such as mutual recognition of sovereignty, diplomacy, international law, the balance of power and great-power management can hardly disappear without the disappearance of international society as such. These institutions are, historically and logically, an integrative part of the modern states system. Historically, they were taking shape long before the 1648 Peace of Westphalia, meaning that they evolved simultaneously with the evolution of independent states and before the orderly aspects of the Holy Roman Empire had vanished (Wight, 1977). Divine law gave way to natural law and positive law. Mutual recognition and diplomacy between kings and princes began under the waning authority of the Roman pope and Emperor. The balance of power and great-power management were evolving as institutional practices in the Middle Ages. Due to these primary institutions there has, in fact, never been a 'naked' states system in the realist sense (James, 1993). Logically, an international society can hardly exist without mutual recognition of sovereignty, diplomacy, international law and (more arguably) a balance of power and collective or unilateral great power management.

Though colonialism and slavery are institutions (or simply practices) that international society can do without, other institutions seem to be an indispensable and integrative part of modern international society. This indicates that fundamental institutional change is both about changes in the working of primary institutions and change in the fundamental architectural line up. Moreover, it indicates that we may distinguish between dispensable and indispensable primary institutions. Indispensable institutions are preconditions of international society as such, or possibly a particular version of it, e.g. solidarist international society.

Secondly, a central question is hereby indicated: How can we conceive of fundamental institutional change if such institutions are preconditions of international society as such? How can primary institutions such as mutual recognition of sovereignty, diplomacy, international law, the balance of power and great power management be open for change, and then at the same time continue to serve as bases of international society and its elements of order and justice? The answer indicated in much English School work including Buzan's is that the working of primary institutions can change over time while some basic conditions of international order or coexistence continue to be provided for. In an attempt to make sense of this I have suggested that institutional continuity is related to constitutive principles while fundamental institutional change is related to the associated practices: Institutional practices may change, the constitutive principles they support continue to be reproduced (Knudsen, 2013; 2014). Compare for instance the Cold War balance of power with that of the 19th century post-Napoleonic era. They look quite different – because the working of the balance of power were different in these historical periods, as a consequence of differences not only in polarity, but also in the practices associated with the balance of power in these two periods. The constitutive principle of the balance of power, namely that no one is in a position to lay down the law to others, and the resulting one that imbalances must be adjusted in one way or another, were

upheld in both periods. But the central practices by which these principles were maintained and reproduced in the 19th century were those of a great-power concert, whereas rivalry, arms race, alliances and spheres of influence were the reproducing practices of the Cold War (Bull, 1977; Holsti, 2004). Another example can be found in current great-power management which takes place under evolving multi-polarity. The great powers still use their preponderance for the maintenance of international order, but shifts between the associated practices of rivalry, balancing and concert are evident in humanitarian intervention and beyond (Knudsen, 2014).

From these observations I suggest that we distinguish between the constitutive principles inherent in primary institutions and the range of practices by which they are reproduced. In this sense, a primary institution may be defined as (1) a (set of) constitutive principle(s) that make meaningful interaction possible, and (2) an associated set of practices by which the constitutive principles are reproduced at a given point in time, with (3) the combined effect of structuring the actions and interactions of states in a sociological rather than a deterministic sense. Consequently, institutional continuity is represented by the ongoing reproduction of one or more constitutive principles which are preconditions of meaningful interaction, while institutional change can be understood as (a) changes in the practices by which the constitutive principles are reproduced or maintained (= change *in* a primary institution), or in rare cases, (b) changes in the constitutive principles themselves (= change *of* a primary institution) (Knudsen, 2013).

These suggestions are not in opposition to Buzan's, but rather complementary to them. But thinking in terms of the model outlined above may involve some extra gains. Firstly, it allows us to specify fundamental institutional continuity and change and their relationship more closely: fundamental institutional continuity can be thought of as the ongoing reproduction of constitutive principles that

make international society as such possible, while fundamental institutional change can be thought of as changes in reproducing practices, and, in rare cases, change in the constitutive principles themselves. Needless to say, this has to be exposed to and applied in close empirical studies, which echoes the call from Wilson (2012) for a grounded approach. Secondly, it allows us to distinguish between principles and practices as the key elements of primary institutions. Thirdly, it allows us to theorize the relationship between primary and secondary institutions, where the former makes the latter possible while the latter offers essential reproduction of fundamental principles and practices and often also designed or evolved changes in the reproducing practices. Fourthly, it underlines the potential of fundamental institutional analysis as a key to understanding contemporary changes in world order including presently the changing practices of great-power management mentioned above and the politics of humanitarian intervention and the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

From Pluralist to Solidarist Institutions?

Buzan's dynamic treatment of primary institutions has important ramifications for another cornerstone in the English School theory of international society, namely the distinction between pluralism and solidarism which he sets out to deconstruct and reformulate. As pointed out by Buzan (2014: 86), Hedley Bull (1966) originally presented these as two competing streams of thought in the history of ideas, as well as two alternative models for the organization of international society. Pluralism was derived from legal positivism and the political theory of, among others, Mill and Burke. Accordingly the minimum requirements of international order such as mutual respect of sovereignty, non-intervention, positive international law and tolerance of differences (each state must decide for itself what 'the good life' is) were conceived as the basic organizational principles of international society (Bull, 1966: 52-53, 67-68; Jackson, 2000). Solidarism was derived from the Grotian internationalist thinking of especially Hugo Grotius and Hersch Lauterpacht. Accordingly, conditional sovereignty, a combination of natural (or progressive) and positive international law,

human rights, collective security, collective enforcement of common principles (by means of international organization and international courts of justice), and the reservation of the use of force for the common good were conceived as the basic organizational principles of international society (Bull, 1966: 52; Lauterpacht, 1946/1975: 307-365 (esp. 354-358); Lauterpacht, 1925/1977: 398).

Bull also indicated that there was a choice to make for states between the pluralist and solidarist conception of international society. Though he had sympathy for the solidarist conception of international society, he was clearly skeptical towards it, because he saw a fundamental contradiction between pluralist principles for the maintenance of international order and solidarist principles for the pursuit of human justice. Under the divisive conditions of the Cold War, solidarist principles were likely to undermine 'those structures of the system, which might otherwise be secure' (Bull, 1966: 70).

As it has been increasingly recognized, however, pluralism and solidarism are not mutually exclusive theoretical and normative positions, or mutually excluding conceptions of international society. They should rather be seen as endpoints on a continuum with many possible combinations, or as two sets of principles and institutions which can be (and historically have been) combined and mixed in the political organization of international society (Knudsen, 1999: 12-17, 72, 74-82, 89-90, 403-407; Knudsen, 2002: 21-26; Buzan, 2004: 45-50; 56-57; de Almeida, 2006; Weinert, 2011). Buzan (2014: 16, 83-87, 89-167) goes further in an attempt to explain the energizing and sometimes sharp debate between the solidarist and pluralist positions as well as the room for solidarist change in contemporary international society. This is done on the basis of the distinction between state-centric and cosmopolitan solidarism. State-centric solidarism is about the potential and actual cooperation among states beyond the minimum requirements of international order, for instance

about the solving of common problems such as climate change, market failure and poverty as well as the promotion of values like human rights on an intergovernmental (and thus state-controlled) basis. In this version of solidarism, states are simply using and reforming the rules and institutions of international society with a view to wider or more ambitious forms of cooperation (Buzan, 2014: 116). Cosmopolitan solidarism is about 'a disposition to give moral primacy to "the great society of humankind", and to hold universal, natural law, moral values as equal to or higher than the positive international law made by states' (Buzan, 2014: 118). In this way humankind becomes a moral referent against which to judge the behavior of states and take international society towards more progressive, just and stable positions (Williams, 2010).

This is a helpful refinement of the classical distinction which paves the way for a number of valuable points. Firstly, Buzan (2014: 118-120) shows how cosmopolitan solidarism (much like liberal utopianism) has sometimes become a position against which pluralist writers have been able to sharpen their own arguments concerning the importance of the long-standing institutional bases of international order. Secondly, he argues that as a consequence of this, pluralist writers have at times been attacking a philosophical abstraction rather than a radical proposal for progressivist change. Thirdly, he argues with reference to state-centric solidarism that 'the main thrust of solidarism in the English School debates is much more about how to make solidarism work within the society of states than, as Bull would have it, necessarily being revolutionist in the sense of setting out to replace the society of states' (Buzan, 2014: 134). Buzan thus argues that parts of the solidarist project are compatible with the pluralist one in so far that they are fundamentally state-based. The product of these points is captured nicely by the formulation that 'while cosmopolitan logic is the main moral impetus for the solidarist camp, state-centric solidarism is the dominant practical theme' (Buzan, 2014:116). In this perspective state-centric solidarist change is possible and likely while cosmopolitan solidarism remains valuable, though primarily as a moral standard and aspiration.

In my view, the former argument is highly convincing as it can be backed with theoretical logic and historical evidence. The latter, however, calls for further discussion and qualification. More precisely, I would argue that principles and institutions associated with cosmopolitan solidarism by Buzan are, theoretically and empirically, also possible in contemporary international society, in spite of its ongoing pluralist bases. The key question here is whether individuals can be subjects of rights and duties under international law in their own right and whether such rights and duties would be fundamentally at odds with pluralist international society, as indicated by Buzan (119-120):

The view that pluralism and solidarism are mutually exclusive rests on an argument over whether primacy of right is to be allocated to individuals or to states. If one takes the reductionist view that individual human beings are the prime referent for rights, and that they must be subjects of international law, carrying rights of their own, then this necessarily falls into conflict with the view that the claim of states to sovereignty (the right to self-government) trumps all other claims to rights. Either individual human beings possess rights of their own (subjects of international law) or they can claim and exercise rights only through the state (objects of international law).

However, the first question regarding individuals as subjects of international law was settled a long time ago to the advantage of the cosmopolitan solidarist conception of international society. As argued by Lauterpacht (1937; 1946; 1950) the laws of war made the individual a subject of international law before and after World War II with rights and duties of their own under international humanitarian law e.g. The Hague and Geneva Conventions and the 1948 Genocide Convention (see Roberts and Guelff , 2000; Weller, 2002). Moreover, these rights and duties were enforced in the post-World War II war crimes tribunals of Nuremberg and Tokyo. Lauterpacht (1946;

1950) also saw human rights as something that turned individuals into bearers of rights and duties in their own right, and this view was substantiated with the adoption of the two 1966 human rights conventions, and thus the move toward genuine international human rights law.

Since then the codification of rights and duties of the individual and the establishment of principles and institutions for the enforcement of these rights and duties have continued. The most important of these developments is the adoption of the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the realization of the Court itself in 2002. Today, individuals and groups of individuals have rights (of protection in times of war and peace) and duties (not to commit such crimes) under international humanitarian law, and these can be enforced at the ICC. This can, under certain clearly specified circumstances, even take place when criminal prosecution is resisted by the home state of the perpetrators of such crimes (Weller, 2002).

The development of a practice of humanitarian intervention at the UN in the 1990s and the adoption of the R2P at the 2005 UN World Summit is another example of the move towards enforcement of humanitarian principles in the rules and machinery of international society. The prevention of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes is not unproblematic, and it still depends very much on the will of states indicating state-centric solidarism in Buzan's terms. But international society now has at its disposal a set of principles and practices – meaning arguably a primary institution (Knudsen, 1997; 1999; 2013) – for the potential prevention of mass atrocity crimes against minorities and peoples, indicating a move towards cosmopolitan solidarism in Buzan's terms.

The rights and duties of the individual, under international humanitarian law and international human rights law, have been agreed on by states but they belong to the individual as a matter of

law. Individuals are bearers of rights and duties in their own right as subjects, not objects, of international law. Not above states, not subordinate to states, but alongside states! Buzan (2014: 117) sees this as an extension of state sovereignty, but it goes much further.

The second question concerning cosmopolitan solidarism - whether such rights and duties of the individual would be subversive to international order - is far from settled, but international society now has the machinery for the enforcement of the rights and duties of individuals and this has been organized precisely by means of a well-considered balance and combination of pluralist and solidarist principles, namely the complementary court system under the Rome Statute, and the dual 'responsibility to protect' of states and international society as represented by the UN and the UN Security Council. States have the primary responsibility to prosecute or protect under the ICC and R2P, but if they fail, states can be overruled by the ICC or the UN Security Council and the rights and duties of individuals or groups of individuals can be enforced against the will of the government which has, or whose citizens have, violated international humanitarian law.

In spite of their cosmopolitan solidarist foundations, humanitarian intervention and international criminal jurisdiction are not ideas, principles and practices that take pluralism and solidarism into a dead end of mutual exclusion. On the contrary, they are contemporary and historical institutions showing how sovereignty, international humanitarian law and minority protection can be organized as parallel and integrated sets of rules and institutions (Knudsen, 1997; 1999; 2000; 2013; 2013a). Occasionally, this gives rise to quite a lot international tension and confrontation as evident in the recent great-power disputes over humanitarian intervention in Libya and Syria, or the African critique of the ICC. However, pluralist principles like the sanctity of borders and non-intervention, and firmly established solidarist institutions like the collective security system of the UN, are also

sometimes violated and subject to great-power disputes and political failure (e.g. the recent international crisis over Ukraine) without any serious consideration that they should be abandoned. Rules and institutions are important, and they will therefore recurrently be the subject of political disputes.

The post-Cold War revival of humanitarian intervention and international criminal jurisdiction show that in practice genuine solidarist change is possible in a simultaneously pluralist international society. These may be taken to be primary institutions of a more solidarist international society, arguably along with international trusteeship which is more solidarist (Knudsen and Laustsen, 2006) than paternalist (Jackson, 2000; Bain, 2003) in the informal UN based model that was developed in Bosnia, Kosovo and East Timor in the 1990s and 2000s. The constitutive principles of these three solidarist primary institutions are that there must be a response to mass atrocities in the machinery of international society, that impunity is not acceptable in international society, and that international society has at least some responsibility for peoples living under war-torn or chaotic conditions (Knudsen, 2013). As argued by Buzan (2004; 2014: 130) and Jackson (2000) other solidarist institutions of a more state-centric kind are also emerging, among them environmental stewardship. To these can be added state-centric solidarist principles and practices in primary institutions normally considered to be pluralist including the market, international law, diplomacy and war (Buzan, 2014: 136-139, 147-153; see also Knudsen 2013; 2014).

As it should be evident by now, I do not want Buzan to abandon the argument about the dynamic, flexible and changeable relationship between pluralist and solidarist principles, but to take it further, meaning beyond state-centric solidarism. Cosmopolitan solidarism as rights and duties of the individual under international law is already a fact and so is the move to collective enforcement

based on international organization and international criminal jurisdiction. The fundamental institutional structure of present-day international society is constitutive of both pluralist and (state-centric and cosmopolitan) solidarist interaction. In my view, humanitarian intervention, international criminal jurisdiction and modern international trusteeship confirm rather than challenge Buzan's argument about the practical entanglement of pluralist and solidarist rules and institutions over time.

English School, Neo-neo-style

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Some might baulk at the notion that Barry Buzan singlehandedly, or with one or two others, 'reconvened' the English School (Buzan, 2001; Linklater and Suganami, 2006: 4, 12, 38). Was it ever disbanded? Does this notion not confuse an informal school of thought with a more formal body such as a committee? As initially conceived by Roy Jones (1981), the English School was a loose collection of scholars identifiable by their commitment to a certain concept, international society, and their common institutional home in the Department of International Relations at the LSE. In later accounts (e.g. Dunne, 1998) this conception was confused with the British Committee on International Theory set up in 1959 with funding from the Rockefeller Foundation and chaired by Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight. While sharing some important common members the two entities are far from synonymous, and the terminological awkwardness of 'reconvening' a 'school' is but one consequence of the common tendency to confuse them. In terms of a fairly loose, if not geographically, collection of scholars sharing the same broad outlook and driven by certain common scholarly concerns, the English School, if not yet in name, was already well established by the time the British Committee first met. The British Committee is best seen not as the cradle of the English School but an important early institutional manifestation (Knudsen, 2000; 2001). This not-entirely-pedantic point out of the way it can be stated without fear of contradiction that Buzan has played a major role in re-energising the school and giving it a disciplinary presence and identity that it did not enjoy even during its putative heyday in the 1960s and 1970s. In the market jargon of today it has

‘instant brand recognition’, and this is largely due to the energy, commitment and resolve of Buzan on a wide range of fronts. The English School now has working-group or ‘section’ status in a number of International Relations (IR) professional associations. English School panels feature regularly and prominently at international conferences. But his chief contribution is the steady stream of papers and monographs produced since he first began to work on the subject in the early 1990s.

An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach is Buzan’s latest offering. It is a work that stands in a long line of English School texts in which the mature scholar pulls together many years of reflection on a broad and demanding subject. As with those earlier works it will have wide appeal, combining a lucid introduction for the relative beginner with a thorough stocktaking for the more advanced student of what has been done and what remains to be done within the school’s rubric. With regard to the latter Buzan suggests some interesting lines of theoretical development. Unlike some of its forerunners, one thinks immediately of Manning’s *The Nature of International Society* and Bull’s *The Anarchical Society*, it also provides a comprehensive guide to the literature.

There is much to admire in this volume. Firstly, it provides a nice definition of the school (p. 8): what was first a club of like-minded predominantly English theorists and historians concerned with the normative basis of international order, became over time a geographically broad network of scholars engaged in a ‘great conversation’ about international/world society, the order/justice nexus, and solidarism/pluralism. This network draws heavily, though not slavishly, on a foundational literature, and it is broadly meliorist not idealist or utopian in approach (p. 30). Of course one could argue that the English School was first a network before it became a club, if ever a club it was beyond our

disciplinary imagination. But the other elements in this definition will strike the English School *cognoscenti* as sound.

Secondly, as well as conventionally highlighting the importance of international society the volume elevates to the English School conceptual pantheon the concept of *raison de système*, a concept first put forward by Adam Watson in his principal work *The Evolution of International Society* (2009) as the English School's counterpoint to realist *raison d'état*. More than anything else this sets apart English School thinking from those branches of realism which it is sometimes erroneously equated. Not only do the theorists themselves have a strong sense of *raison de système*—Kissinger and Morgenthau among others have/had that—but they conceive it as a powerful though not determining behavioural logic of states. It is the logic of 'it pays to make the system work' as Watson (2009: 14) put it, among other things by participating in shared institutions such as diplomacy, the balance of power, and international law. States often act and justify their actions in terms of *raison d'état*, but by the same token they often arrive at their conception of *raison d'état* by reference to their understanding of systemic requirements. States generally define their interests not against the system but in terms of the general rules and agreements that individually restrain and, in so doing, collectively benefit them.

Thirdly, the volume provides a valuable analysis of the disjuncture between hegemony and sovereign equality in contemporary international society. As argued by Watson (2007, 2009) hegemony is a staple feature of international life. Indeed with his pendulum metaphor he comes close to positing that a mechanism is at work in international life, with hegemony occupying the midpoint at the bottom of the arc of the pendulum's swing between the two 'theoretical absolutes' of absolute independence of states and absolute empire (Watson, 2009: 13-23, 319-25). This

mechanical concept contrasts sharply with that of others who see hegemony as a social institution, actual or potential (Clark, 2009, 2011). This not insignificant English School disagreement aside, few would dispute Watson's contention that hegemony, or the existence of a small number of competing regional hegemonies, is the normal condition of the system. But the de facto position of hegemony sits uneasily with the de jure position of sovereign equality, a general and for some vague principle, but no less important for that. But this disjuncture creates problems for legitimacy, and problems for legitimacy in the English School reckoning spell problems for order. The problem is not easily solved in theory, even less so in practice. Retreat to a more pluralistic order in which sovereign equality might remain an aspiration but ceases to be a principle that daily informs practice is one remedy. Advance to a more solidarist order in which the practice of hegemony becomes heavily circumscribed, normatively and practically, is another. But neither remedy is as simple as it first appears. This is because, in Buzan's view, they are not separate but 'interlinked sides in an ongoing debate about the moral construction of international order' (p. 113). While the pluralist/solidarist distinction might be central to English School thinking, Buzan insightfully suggests that in practice international society is never one or the other. Rather, a creative tension between them is at its very heart. Indeed, Buzan contends they have 'yin/yang qualities in which each is a necessary presence in the other' (p. 84).

Fourthly, in a debate often shrouded in misunderstanding, Buzan makes a helpful distinction between two types of solidarism, state-centric and cosmopolitan (pp.114-120). Critics of solidarism, both within and without the English School, have generally attacked the latter type, seeing solidarism as the desire to transcend the states-system. Buzan shows, however, that English School solidarists are in fact much more moderate and pragmatic, motivated by cosmopolitan values, but in practice seeking merely to move international society beyond a basic logic of coexistence. It is true that they have over-focused on the issue of human rights vs. state sovereignty, in the process

disguising the degree of state-centric solidarism, understood as collective or global governance, that has developed, for example, in the economic sector: through the IMF, the World Bank, the G8, G20, and the spread more generally of the ideas, values and institutions of liberal capitalism (pp. 120, 136-9). (It should be noted, of course, that other understandings of solidarist international society, such as help and assistance to economically weaker states, have been served less well by the spread of liberal capitalism). But even in the human rights sector the English School predilection has been not to abandon international society but to broaden and deepen the degree of cooperation and the scope for common action within it, i.e. not to downgrade the predominant position and role of states but to enhance their collective capability.

Finally, the volume contains many astute and perceptive observations on the current state of international relations. In common with many general works of theory, much of the analysis is highly abstract. But in the practical spirit of the English School the theory is always the servant of greater 'real world' understanding. Buzan usually finds a way of bringing even the most star-bound conceptual scheme down to ground. Thus, embedded in abstract analysis of actual and potential primary institutions such as the market or democracy we find such insights as: 'The price of living with a global market ... [is] the need to engage in a continuous learning process about how to adapt to, and stabilize, the ever unfolding challenges it generate[s]' (p. 137); and, democracy may be an emergent and not fully-fledged institution but it 'has enough clout as an international norm to make authoritarian regimes feel existentially challenged' (p. 161). With such insights we encounter the trademark wisdom of the mature scholar, but also the power of integrated analysis, the skillful bringing together of the empirical and the theoretical, the abstract and the concrete.

But these and other strengths of the book should not disguise a number of weaknesses. Some of these are minor and fairly easily rectified. For example, many will agree with Buzan's characterization of the contemporary school as a post-club network. The understanding of it as a club, however, tends to seep back in here and there. Thus Buzan asserts that the English School today 'retains a strong but far from dominant position in British IR' (p. 11). Can a network be 'strong' or 'dominant'? The club idea seems to be informing this sentence. Similarly he contends that the 'the English School certainly deserves the brickbats it has received for not having been rigorous enough in defining its terms' (p.25). But the writings of Bull, Vincent, James and Jackson are peppered with definitions. Hedley Bull wrote his undergraduate dissertation at Sydney University on 'Definition' and as Vincent says 'never got out of the habit' (Vincent, 1990: 42). The issue here seems to be not so much rigour of definition as agreement on definition among the members. But why should a network agree? Here Buzan's network is being tested by a standard more appropriate to a club.

A second example concerns Buzan's use of E. H. Carr as a foil for what he contends is most distinctive and in some cases most valuable about the school. Buzan's case for differentiating the English School from realism (pp. 26-9) is subtle and persuasive. But in the process of making it he presents an image of Carr as a common-or-garden realist that is dated and, except for a nice footnote on Carr's 'double anti-liberalism' (p. 190), insensitive to the findings of the extensive revisionist scholarship on Carr (see e.g. Jones, 1998; Cox, 2000; Wilson, 2013; Molloy, 2013). This is a fairly big subject but in brief Buzan confuses Carr's use of realism as a weapon for attacking those he does not like, predominantly liberals of one kind and another, with Carr's position on international relations in toto. For Carr international society amounted to far more than 'a self-interested epiphenomenon of great power politics' (p. 32). Indeed in his desire to strike a balance between power and morality, and arrive at a common understanding of what is 'right and

reasonable' in international affairs, Carr's conception is not far removed from an English School conception. Indeed it could be argued that Carr's conception is more solidarist, more precisely (and with gratitude to Buzan) state-centric solidarist, than pluralist. He viewed the future of international relations in terms of a set of regional solidarisms, pushed on by industrial and capitalist modernity (Wilson, 2001). This chimes, indeed, with a number of themes Buzan develops later in his book, which makes one think that rather than a realist foil Carr could have been better and more sensitively employed as an insightful early protagonist of the kind of argument regarding current trends and the future of international society that Buzan wishes to make—essentially English School plus globalization. In addition, Buzan contends that even in the area of great power management where realism and the English School have much in common, a significant difference exists with 'realists such as Carr emphasizing the self-interest of great powers in "managing" the international society, and the English School emphasizing *raison de système*' (p. 29). I am not sure this is the case. Could not all Carr says about the need to balance power with morality, reduce to a minimum unnecessary force and violence, and the vital importance of peaceful change, represent an attempt to identify and strengthen *raison de système* (see e.g. Carr, 1939: 264-84, 302-07)? I am not here supporting the claim that Carr should be seen as a member of the English School (see e.g. Dunne, 1998: 12-13), but he could certainly be seen as a forerunner and ideational resource for some of its more progressive elements (see e.g. Dunne, 1998: 23-46).

There are, however, some shortcomings less easily rectified. Indeed, they relate to the brand of English School scholarship that here and in other writings Buzan develops. Relative beginners and even some advanced students need to be aware of the dangers of hitching the school to the work and reputation of one, albeit prominent, scholar—Buzan today as it was Bull in the 1980s and 1990s. Around a core set of ideas and problematics the school permits considerable diversity of style, focus and approach. Indeed, its academic pluralism not to say oecumenicalism is often held out as one of

its main attributes. Given this it is important to stress that Buzan's brand of English School theory is in some respects heterodox; so much so that some early English School contributors do not see it as English School at all, though it is certainly developed logically if inevitably selectively from the wealth of ideas contained within the foundational literature.

There are two related points I want to make in this connection. The first concerns the missing chapter in Buzan's volume. It is entitled 'The English School and the History of Ideas'. It is an important chapter because the English School has contributed more to this subject than any of the other major IR schools and traditions. Buzan mentions Bull et al on Grotius, Keene on Grotius, Wights '3 R's'. But to these should be added Bull on Kelsen, Wight's *Four Seminal Thinkers*, Vincent on Hobbes, Vincent on Burke, Hurrell on Kant, Sharp on Butterfield, Navari's recent collection on 'public intellectuals', not to mention Wilson on Woolf, Wilson on Murray. The list is a long one. All of these studies have a broad educational purpose, and can be conceived as extending into a sometimes narrow and presentist field the tradition and philosophy of liberal learning. It is a good in itself to know what great minds thought in the past and with what effects. But these studies also have the more practical aim of enriching, clarifying, and putting into historical perspective current thinking and concerns. They are geared to past understanding as a good in itself but also as a means to current end, deepening and sharpening current thought. For this reason it is no accident that the major studies of non-intervention, nationalism, and sovereignty within the English School all employ in large part a history of ideas approach (see e.g. Vincent, 1974; Mayall, 1990; Jackson, 2007). The point is that if the English School is a 'great conversation', as Buzan frequently depicts it, then part of what makes it great is dialogue with the past—keeping alive, reflecting on, reordering and putting into a new light past ideas. All with an eye on the present. The English School has been remarkably good at this, though one would not glean this from Buzan's latest pages.

The second point concerns a dimension of English School thinking that has received considerable attention in the last decade, not least from Buzan: primary institutions. Despite all the attention some fairly fundamental problems remain. Indeed, early in his discussion Buzan acknowledges that there may be problems with 'how to theorize primary institutions' (p. 80), by which he largely means how to go about determining their existence. Yet the main body of the book on pluralism and solidarism (Chapters 6-9) proceeds as if their existence is unproblematic. But we then learn in the final chapter that their existence is indeed problematic, at least to the extent that there is a vigorous debate on how to empirically ground them (pp. 173-8). Be this as it may, Buzan's confidence in the existence of primary institutions is generally high, even with regard to some new candidates for institutional status. He says, for example, that 'human inequality was certainly... a primary institution during this [pluralist] historical period' (p. 108). To which it may be responded, it was certainly a widespread Western (and not only Western) assumption, but why this more grand thing a 'primary institution'? Why should it be considered more of an institution than, say, mercantilism or the right to proselytize? And with regard to the right to proselytize, the Christian dimension of Buzan's 'expansion story' is almost entirely absent; nineteenth-century empire was not only about Western modernity, but the spread of the Christian faith. Moving into the twentieth century Buzan says that 'there can be no doubt that human equality is now widely and deeply accepted as an institution of international society' (p. 160). To which it may be responded, it might be a widely and even deeply accepted general principle (though one wonders sometimes about the depth), but why an 'institution'? In addition, Buzan talks of the 'relatively late arrival of nationalism to the pantheon of primary institutions' (p. 110). But how do we know when a primary institution has arrived? At what point does an idea, principle, norm, or collection thereof, become an institution? It seems to me that the problem here is not at root conceptual—definitions of institutions, norms, principles, and the like abound—but empirical; and by empirical I have in mind not only or even mainly material facts but interpretive and social facts. That is, how people, or the relevant people, think, feel, perceive, understand. What are their social assumptions, standards and expectations? How can we

construct the ‘thought-world’ of the relevant actors and what the Sprouts called their ‘psychomilieu’? Without detailed exploration of questions such as this all we have to fall back on is intelligent guesswork. On this problem and a potential resolution to it I have set my ideas elsewhere (Wilson, 2012) and there is no need to recount them here. The point about Buzan’s analysis of institutions is that although highly impressive and thought-provoking it remains highly abstract, more in the spirit of neorealism, or perhaps more broadly the neo-neo debate, than the English School. Where it could be asked are the people in Buzan’s institutions? Where are the quotes from the likes of Kissinger, Churchill, Roosevelt, Wilson, Cobden, Jefferson, de Tocqueville, Richelieu, and a host of lesser diplomatic celebs that animate earlier English School writings, especially those of Wight, Bull, Jackson and Vincent? Admittedly, these writers were not especially systematic in the gathering of their interpretive data; and of course allowances have to be made for different styles of writing, different types of research, differing interests and emphases. But with a subject such as primary institutions can we do without interpretive data of at least some kind? Until it is gathered and utilized one suspects that, like so much neorealist and/or neoliberal analysis, the study of the institutional structure of international society will remain plausible on the abstract plane, but its lack of concreteness will leave many beyond the walls of the English School unconvinced. It will also retain this people-less rather mechanical quality—an odd thing for a ‘societal approach’.

Unschooling the English School: Builders and Interpreters

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Keywords: Buzan, British Committee, English School, ISA

In writing this introduction to the English School, Barry Buzan (Buzan, 2014) has performed a great service for those who identify with the School and for those discovering it for the first time. It is fitting that Buzan should be the author, for no one has toiled harder than he at constructing the School and carving out a space for it within the wider canon of International Relations (IR). And it is fitting that the book should appear now when it has finally been established to the satisfaction of empiricists and inter-subjectivists alike that the English School actually exists. We know this, because it enjoys an entry in the index of just about every example of that great gravy train, the American introductory IR text. True, it may occupy a corner seat in the ‘other approaches’ compartment of the theory carriage, dutifully, but inaccurately, presented as Realism-lite and then discarded. And true, the other occupants may still find conversation with it difficult, unsettled as they often are by its way of making them feel at the same time both dumber and smarter. Nevertheless, the English School is on the train. For those of us who have labored for years in an academic world dominated by a strong consensus about what count as problems, methods, arguments, and solutions, this is a source of great relief for which we owe Buzan, more than anyone else, much thanks.

As Buzan clearly intended, his introduction has been written to invite conjectures, refutations and commentaries on his account of the state of play. In this article, however, I will linger only briefly on the usual questions associated with an English School stocktaking exercise, for example, how well has the introduction done in establishing the English School’s existence, its origins, its present form, and its future direction. It is still great fun to revisit discussions of who was present at the creation,

discussions which rumble on even as those involved maintain it is not particularly important. It is even more fun to talk those foundational figures still alive and to sift through private papers or the boxes in Cambridge and at the LSE. They provide rare and fascinating glimpses of an intellectual project emerging. However, multiple stories emerge. In my version, for example, I would emphasize the diversity of interests which characterized the deliberations of British Committee on the Theory of International Politics (BCTIP)—the English School’s precursor in some accounts of its history, an early institutional expression in others. Papers on the Macedonian system (Watson, 1972) and the liberal pedigree of diplomacy (Keens Soper, 1974), for example, rubbed shoulders with attempts to assess the significance of the defection of Lin Piao (Hudson, 1972) and the place of decolonization in the international system (Dorr, 1974). Roads not taken by the participants or anyone since abound. We have become familiar, for example, with Wight’s (1977) views on the underlying cultural unity he regards as being necessary for a states system, with Bull’s (1977) position that such a system can appear as a consequence of calculations of practical benefit by its participants, and with James’ (1993) claim that such systems appear as a logical and practical necessity when independent political units need to interact with one another. My English School story would emphasize Butterfield’s (1961) view that a states-system emerges when a common underlying culture is fragmenting.

Tracing lineage and discussing who should be regarded as in or out is fun, albeit for fewer people as time passes. Stocktaking also seems to be in the English School’s genes (Dunne, 1998; Linklater and Suganami, 2006; Wilson, 2012; Suganami, 2014). It dates back, at least on the Cambridge front, to attempts at summarizing the deliberations of the BCTIP undertaken by Butterfield (1961; 1964). History and stocktaking have remained important for another reason, however, to demonstrate that the English School exists. My purpose here, therefore, is to examine two questions. Why might it be thought a good idea to develop an English School; and what might possibly be some of the disadvantages of having done so? In examining these questions, I will focus on the idea of an

academic school in its most mundane sense, that is to say, as a group of scholars seeking to give themselves and their ideas a collective identity institutionally expressed. I shall also assume that a school in this sense implies being a school among other schools and within a system or even society of schools which has rules about membership and appropriate conduct. Having dashed down the platform to catch the disciplinary train and having found our seat, it seems to me timely that we check our pockets to see if anything is missing or in danger of falling out

Academic schools, like other collectives, may be seen as existing to make their members more secure and, if they are successful, to enhance their members' reputations. While academia is no anarchy, it may be viewed in part as a structured arena of power politics populated by people who have an interest in their own professional survival and success. One of the ways to survive and prosper is to produce published research in a world where the number of opportunities to do so is always less than the number of people seeking to publish. A school of scholars with something in common about the way they approach their subject is assumed to exert far more influence on the grant providers, conference organizers, and publishers that create and control access to publishing than each of the scholars acting in isolation. To provide a concrete example, prior to the attempt to create of an English School Section of the North American-based International Studies Association (ISA) in 2000, the chances of what would be recognized as English School panels or individual papers being accepted for its annual convention were minimal. Once an English School Section was created, however, an automatic allocation of thirty papers became available. To get the section, however, the case had to be made that there was a group of scholars doing highly worthwhile things in similar ways but which, in the existing scheme of things, was not able to gain access to participation. With a section, the English School became a player competing for resources which rendered its members more secure and provided opportunities for extending their influence further. Helping to set up the English School Section of ISA, for example, contributed to my own promotion and, once established,

the section greatly expanded my prospects for acceptance onto the Convention's annual program. Of course, the academic struggle for survival and thus for wealth, power, influence and status—both in the ISA case and in other competitions for academic resources—is mild compared to similar competitions in other walks of life. And the form of the struggle is primarily an intellectual one in which arguments are made, supported and critically evaluated. As we can see, however, particularly when the resource pile is shrinking or demands upon it are increasing, academia is no more immune than other walks of life from being tainted by politics and power, if not in the motives of those who make decisions, then in the consequences of those decisions in the eyes of those affected by them. In such conditions, to be in a group with shared interests and capabilities is better than acting alone.

It cannot, of course, be any old group. Were this the case, then members of the English School could simply have joined other academic groups already in existence. There have to be some elements which the members discover and experience when they work with each other which they do not find elsewhere. The commonalities matter for a variety of reasons. Protestations about the need for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary collaboration, bridge-building and reaching out across the divides notwithstanding, most people in IR like to associate with like. By this, I do not mean people who always agree with us so much as people who think about things in similar ways. Thus it is, for example, that I can understand, learn from and enjoy an English School argument which is moving in a direction with which I strongly disagree far more than I can a positivist demonstration of a proposition for which, in itself, I have more sympathy. However, the impulse to find, make, grow and enjoy being in our own little groups does not result in an atomized or radically plural academic world. Instead, the advantages of association provided by being in a school of like-minded people may lead to collaboration, and collaboration can lead to expansion of both the scope and the complexity of the investigations being undertaken. As a consequence, as a school develops there is a

tendency for its members to discover a need for collaboration and cooperation with the members of other schools.

A number of consequences follow. First, there have to be basic rules about who can be a participant in these interactions. There are rules for interactions between groups, for example, about joint workshops or collaboration in the creation of shared panels. And there are internal rules about how a school or group maintains its own sense of itself through the processes of interacting with others. Thus, If an academic school wants to be a section of ISA—to get the panel allocation, for example, or to appear as a school in the Compendium reference work sponsored by the ISA (Denemark, 2010)—then it must tailor itself to look like an ISA section with a charter, officers, meetings, and an acceptable account of its distinctive theoretical and methodological underpinnings. Elsewhere and to its members, the English School may present itself in looser, subtler and more complex terms. As a school among schools, however, the processes of schooling in which it must engage become instrumental in shaping the English School a particular way and locating it in a particular place in a broader intellectual scheme.

Schools can be seen as institutional actors which establish and confirm the collective identity of their members while safeguarding and advancing their interests both as individuals and collectively. However, they also exist to make claims based upon their members' investigations and reflections about how to understand aspects of the world in which they are interested. And on the basis of these claims, their members suggest courses of action which are likely to be wise or foolish in prudential terms, and good or bad in moral terms. Generally, but not necessarily, these claims are organized around challenging other understandings which are often presented as established or orthodox and, on the bases of the challenges, suggesting alternative and better ways of thinking and

acting. In short, schools exist for something, or to accomplish something beyond sustaining themselves and their members. This is where the English School becomes both interesting and problematic, for only with great difficulty can it be made to fit into conventional school talk and school games.

These difficulties are illustrated by attempting to imagine other IR schools in the mundane sense in which I have presented the idea of schools and with which the English School rubs shoulders. The Realist School, for example, presents as a simple, purposeful racing scow, its small and disciplined crew intent upon maintaining their own course. They have arguments among themselves, of course, but they are of a navigational, rather than existential, sort. The tacks they impose upon themselves seem to take them further away from the shores on which most of us live, except on those rare occasions—defining moments in Waltzian terms—when their course brings them close in and they sweep by giving us all a good soaking to remind us of the importance of power politics. The Liberal School, in its American iteration at least, appears as a modern cruise ship pursuing a steady course in a single direction. It offers places for far more people—highly stratified it is true, but according to a rational deck-plan with plenty of stairs and ladders to higher decks with better menus, more space, and possibly even a seat at the captain’s table for those who are ambitious and prepared to be reasonable and supportive of his policies. Cruise ships cannot always see racing scows and hailing between the two is undertaken with great difficulty, but when they do actually see each other, they at least recognize each other as water craft.

In these terms, the English School appears as a patched up houseboat which, when looked at from some angles at least, manages to have the shimmering outlines of a graceful Arthurian barge. It is always possible to hear the sounds of hammering and tearing up from within as the crew goes about

its self-appointed tasks. They can be heard raising basic and worrying (to the boating mind at least) questions of the sort 'do we really need a transom?' Ask members of the crew where the houseboat is supposed to be going and some will point in a direction but note that progress towards it is very slow, subject to setbacks, and may not be helped much by us all putting our feet over the stern and kicking. Nevertheless, they will maintain, this is the right thing to do. Others will suggest the boat is going nowhere in particular and that attempts to make it do so will stress what is of necessity a very weak hull with damaging consequences. Experience, they will say, allows reason to recognize rough and calm water, how to survive the former and enjoy the latter. Beyond that, however, there is not much new to say, although explaining this to those who would otherwise put everything at risk by rocking the boat turns out to be pretty much a full time job. Still others will deny they are members of the crew or that there even is a boat at all. Ask who are members of the crew and some of them will answer that—in a sense—everyone is. The Realist racing scow, the Liberal cruise ship, and the English School houseboat itself have iterations in which they all appear as part of the houseboat, as the tensions between them are somehow presented as parts of its structure.

Like the houseboat, the metaphor is becoming strained. My purpose in employing it is not to lampoon. Up to a point, attempts at English School stocktaking capture for me everything that is attractive about the English School because they are so difficult to undertake and because in terms of conventional thinking about international relations and IR theory they throw up important and entertaining paradoxes. Buzan's attraction to taxonomy, and for 'the naming of the parts', results in some very effective work in this regard (Buzan, 2004a). Even more effective is the way in which, once he has laid the cards out on the table in their conventional relationships to one another, he shuffles the pack. Recall, for example, how he springs upon us solidarism's function in maintaining the integrity of sub-units, just when we have become used to its role in stories about the possible emergence and strengthening of a global society (Buzan, 2004). However, Buzan's recent

introduction also captures the risks of undertaking description and taxonomy in a way which seeks to present the English School as a school among schools within a discipline or field of study. Creating a taxonomy of things thought about or discussed shades into a structuring of the complex ways in which these things may be related to one another which, in turn, shades into a presentation of the world or at least its ideational component. There is nothing inherently wrong with undertaking such an exercise and presenting it as one person's account of how they see things and how they appear to be related. The pressures of 'schooling', however, nudge the exercise in the direction of coming up with something authoritative, comprehensive, and directional. The problem here is not so much one of capturing the English School in a specific form with which many of those associated with it might disagree. It is the idea of such a capture itself and acting upon it which seems at odds with what others associated with the School regard as its intellectual commitments and theoretical assumptions. It is also undertaken without much of a payoff from those outside the English School who are invited to be introduced to it. My more positivist colleagues in the American political science department where I work, for example, would struggle with Buzan's introduction and conclude that its characterization of methodological pluralism and its attempts to situate contradictory understandings, claims, and prescriptions as parts of a whole and existing in relation to one another, simply make no sense.

Consider again Buzan's great talent for shuffling the pack of ideas just as their positions in relation to one another have been established. For him, this presents a challenge. How are we to modify the structure of ideas which the taxonomy has suggested in order to incorporate this new possibility? We are challenged to get it right or, at least, more accurate. Another approach, however, also associated with the English School, would suggest the need for great skepticism about such a project. In thinking and doing IR theory, it would maintain that the challenge is not to identify tensions, resolve contradictions and provide more coherent accounts of the world. Rather, it is to

identify the ambiguities, limitations and consequences of the ways in which both practitioners and theorists think about international relations. One gets this sense from the early papers of the old British Committee. They track the attempts of other people doing their best to make sense of international relations. They speak cautiously about exploring the possibility of whether conversations can be moved towards higher levels of generality, but the activity is speculative, tentative and not particularly self-conscious. They make their arguments, push the boat out in Butterfield's phrase, let it go, and move on to other things. Their theorizing is lightly worn. Thus Wight is content with the notion that Christendom fades and a sovereign state system can emerge when people undergo a change of heart. Butterfield is prepared to allow for cupidity to wreck perfectly good ideas and Providence to rescue them. Even Watson's and Bull's more explicit attempts at developing structures, understanding their origins, and speculating about their futures have this tentative and highly individualistic quality about them. They do not build on others and do not appear to expect to be built upon. They produce interpretive reactions to what other people can see of international relations and attempt to grasp them, rather than building sites with cumulative potentials. In this sense, Bull and Watson's (1984) edited collection of essays on the expansion of international society is not an early ground-breaking project lacking the coherence one might expect from a more mature stage in the development of a school's research program. Their juxtaposing of some widely different interpretations on a highly general theme, and their invitation to further reflections by other people is precisely, for some people, what the English School is all about.

'For some people', of course, is the key here. The English School can present as many faces as there are people who identify with it. No amount of demarcating where it came from, where it is, and where ought to be going by those who like to build will change that for those who like to interpret. Equally, no amount of whistle-blowing by interpreters who protest that 'you can't do that!' will prevent the builders from attempting to give their shapes to the whole. However, one of the great

things about the English School is that, were it to have conditions of membership, then joyfully accepting the tension between builders and interpreters as a permanent condition, rather worrying about it as a problem in need of a solution, would be one of them.

In another stock-taking cum introductory collection of essays, Roger Epp (2014) notes how much has resulted from a few people trading papers and comments in a club-like atmosphere where the pressures to publish were minimal. The flight of Lin Piao, properly handled over tea and sherry, could quickly lead to considerations at the highest level of generality and, as it turns out, considerations of lasting significance, given that Lin Biao's name, like Abou Ben Adhem's, has reappeared on the angel's list. Epp is undoubtedly correct in maintaining that these early exchanges of papers have had remarkable consequences. He is also correct when he suggests that it is no longer possible to reproduce those conditions, at least in a way with such widespread consequences. The relaxed but authoritative speculations of a privileged few have been replaced by myriads of local groups and global networks engaging in their own less relaxed speculations about all aspects of international relations. It is equally the case, however, that without Barry Buzan's efforts in a very different world from the one in which the British Committee operated, the traditions of speculation and theorizing identified with the English School would be in a much weaker position. Important gains have been made by seeking the status of a school as I have defined it, and we have lost little so far in our dash down the platform to catch the disciplinary train. There are, nevertheless, things to worry about. Buzan notes the English School is the only theoretical approach which has its own section in the ISA. This may be a mixed blessing. Is it a bridgehead, an invitation to permanent marginalization, or a straitjacket which increases the pressure to come up with holistic accounts of what the English School is, and to respond to Finnemore-type (2001) challenges to specify international systems and societies in terms which end up satisfying hardly anyone? Now the gains of mundane schooling have been made, it is time to be a little less self-conscious and a little less

schooled, and to go about our work, allowing questions and puzzles to strike us, and our responses and investigations to take us where they will. If this results in what others can see as a broad yet coherent set of responses to things which they regard as important, then good. If not, then that is also good. For many of those associated with the English School, so long as they continue to encounter work which engages them with the puzzles presented by people who are both emotional and reasoning, and who want to live together and apart, and who argue over how to do this, then that will be English School enough.

Primary and Secondary Institutions: Quo Vadit?

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Keywords: primary institutions, secondary institutions, international organization, English School

Barry Buzan has placed primary institutions at the center of his understanding of the English School and has deployed them to mark what is distinctive about the approach, and how they may be used, both comparatively and functionally, as analytical devices for exposing the social aspects of international order. But it is the distinction between primary and secondary institutions that has proved especially enlightening, and the one that may even deliver the long-awaited causal theory of international order. His initiation of the distinction (Buzan 2004) began a remarkable process of theoretical development, that elaborated the English School notion of institutions, that related that notion to international organizations, and that has been taken up by fellow scholars in the English School tradition, who have posited not only functional and dynamic relations between them, but also specified models of the relationship—models, moreover, with causal properties.

In the 2004 volume, Buzan drew on conventional institutional theory to draw a distinction between primary institutions, associated in the conventional literature with social practices such as marriage, baptism and fox hunts, and secondary institutions, which are social and political organizations such as universities, government bureaucracies and business enterprises. He related these to the English School understanding of institutions, the traditional English School scholars being concerned mainly with primary institutions. In other words, he identified Bull's five institutions of international society, including diplomacy and sovereignty, as social practices and 'primary institutions' as understood in institutional theory. He assigned to liberal theory concern with secondary institutions, and observed that liberal institutionalists primarily direct their attention to secondary institutions in the form of international organizations and regimes. In his 2014 work he identifies the latter as:

the products of a certain types of international society (most obviously liberal, but possibly other types as well), ... for the most part intergovernmental arrangements consciously designed by states to serve specific functional purposes. They include the United Nations, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the Nuclear Non-proliferation regime (p. 16).

He places secondary institutions as a relatively recent invention, first appearing 'as part of industrial modernity' in the later decades of the nineteenth century.

But Buzan does more than note a division of labour. He hints at a critical relationship that each 'school' in its own way had hitherto routinely ignored, and that has to be taken into account when considering institutional development, particularly the development of secondary institutions. As he characterizes it in the present volume, 'secondary institutions are reflective and supportive of primary ones, and their possibilities are constrained by the broader framing of primary institutions within which they necessarily operate' (Buzan, 2014: 30). Secondary institutions not only reflect, but also *support* primary institutions, and they are *necessarily* constrained by the broader diplomatic framework that is created by primary institutions and practices.

He also begins to develop a systemic theory of the relationship, calling on Hedley Bull's distinction between constitutional principles, regulative norms and rules. Barely understood or discussed in the traditional accounts, Bull (1977) posited a systematic relationship between constitutional principles, which Buzan identifies with primary institutions, and normative principles and rules, which Buzan identifies with secondary institutions. To recall those distinctions, Bull (1977: 65-76) framed his understanding of international relationships as social relationships within a functional conception of society. In his conception, human societies, of whatever sort, must be founded on understandings

about three issues: security against violence; observance of agreements; and property rights. These will take the form of rules, of which Bull distinguished three sorts, operating at different levels:

1. Constitutional normative principles, which are the foundations of a social order, and which set out the basic ordering principle of the society. With regard to the anarchical society he set out a number of ideal types as illustration (e.g. society of states, universal empire, state of nature, and cosmopolitan community).
2. Rules of coexistence (sometimes called procedural rules), which set out the minimum behavioural conditions for society, and therefore hinge on the basic elements of society: limits to violence; establishment of property rights; and sanctity of agreements.
3. Rules to regulate cooperation in politics, strategy, society and economy. About these Bull (1977: 70) says: 'Rules of this kind prescribe behaviour that is appropriate not to the elementary or primary goals of international life, but rather to those more advanced or secondary goals that are a feature of an international society in which a consensus has been reached about a wider range of objectives than mere coexistence'.

This schema recalls the idea of a legal system, developed by both Kelsen and Hart, from which it was most likely derived. According to the idea of a legal system, a complete legal order will have three forms of rules. First, it will have constitutive principles, which create 'legal facts' such as the constitutive principles of a liberal democracy (that give rise, for example, to the institutions of a representative democracy). Secondly, it will have procedural rules—Bull's 'rules of coexistence'—with reference to liberal orders e.g. a bill of rights. Thirdly, it will have instructions for the 'rule carriers' on how to perform their roles.

In Bull's schema it is fairly clear that in his category of regulatory rules (and possibly also procedural ones) he intended the placement of secondary institutions. In Buzan's (2014: 98) characterization: 'Here one would find everything from the UN system, through arms control treaties, to the regimes and institutions for managing trade, finance, environment, and a host of technical issues from postage to allocation of orbital slots and broadcast frequencies'. In Bull's schema the exact relationship between constitutive principles and regulatory rules was not drawn out, which may explain why it has been ignored for so long. Buzan, by contrast, posits such a relationship. In his 2004 work, he proposed that secondary institutions, or international organizations, exist to *operationalise* primary institutions. In the current work he writes, 'the great society of humankind may have force as a moral referent, but for the most part it lacks the agency to implement and defend universal rights. Only states, or secondary institutions largely under the control of states, can do that' (Buzan, 2014: 115). In Buzan's conception, secondary institutions are, first, an empirical indicator of primary institutions, and secondly, in Spandler's (2015: 8) a 'positive materialization' of them. They are required to fill out the existential potential of primary institutions and give them definition. Buzan's discussion of the WTO in *From International to World Society?* and its relation to what he identifies as the 'master institution' of the market, and the constitutive principle of 'liberalising trade' (Buzan, 2004: 187), makes this clear. The rules of the WTO are the empirical manifestation of the market norm; they are also the procedural rules required to operationalize the 'market'; and the instructions to its officers, for example, the regulations for the Appellate Body, are required to link the generality of the rules to specific instances of them.

Several developments followed Buzan's (2004) characterization. First, his former research student Laust Schoenborg laid out the essential elements of Buzan's schema comparing his schema with other attempts to order institutions among English School writers (Schoenborg, 2011). It was picked up by the editors of the *Wiley Guide to the English School of International Studies* (Navari and Green, 2014) and a more developed version would eventually appear in the *Guide*. Secondly, and following

on from that, a small working group was convened under the auspices of the English School section of the International Studies Association (ISA), chaired by Christian Brüttsch who had written an important article linking the IMF to the primary institution of diplomacy (Brüttsch, 2014). The group included Schoenborg, Tonny Brems Knudsen and the present writer, who together planned an 'innovative panel' for the ISA conference in San Francisco in 2014. The group produced a number of theoretical postulates, the most important of which was that of Knudsen (2013: 18): 'Although international organizations are secondary to the primary institutions, they are important to their reproduction and working, and therefore also to changes in their working'.

In this formulation, Knudsen adds an important qualifier to the Bull/Buzan formulation. It is not merely that secondary institutions are a deposit of the primary institutions and are, as Buzan had already postulated (and Bull had implied), important to their 'working'. They also have some *independent effects* on them. First, they have reproduction effects: secondary institutions such as the United Nations not only instantiate but also *reproduce* versions of primary institutions—in generative terms, they bring them about in successive processes, and accordingly possess potential causal properties in relation to them. Secondly, in the generative process, changes can be, and he goes on to say inevitably are, introduced into the primary institutions. He illustrates this process by reference to both the laws of war and the non-intervention principle. Pointing to the 'reservation of the use of force for the common good and the revival of humanitarian intervention, international criminal jurisdiction and international trusteeship' he observes that such developments in primary institutions 'owe a lot to the UN especially' (Knudsen, 2013: 19).

Knudsen also attempts a clarification of the underlying nature of a primary institution. First, as opposed to Bull and Buzan, he does not assign to primary institutions only constitutive principles, and to secondary institutions only the regulative processes, as was implied in the Bull and Buzan distinctions. Drawing on Alexander Wendt and Raymond Duvall's (1989) keynote article on

institutions and international order, he argues that primary institutions have both constitutive *and* *regulative* effects on states and their interaction. He uses as an example the *constitutive principle* of the balance of power, namely (in Vattel's classic formulation) that no one can lay down the law to others, together with the evident implication that imbalances must be adjusted in one way or another. There were different working practices of the balance of power between the 19th century and today. Knudsen (2013: 16) writes: 'From these observations I suggest that we distinguish between the constitutive principles inherent in fundamental institutions and the range of practices by which they may be reproduced or organized.' By this distinction, Knudsen not only intended to defend the continuity of 'fundamental institutions' (his preferred term for primary institutions), but also to clarify their nature. A primary institution, such as diplomacy or great power management, is not a single 'thing'. Rather, it is a clutch of norms in which are admixed constitutive principles and regulative directives. Accordingly, 'a fundamental or master institution may be defined as (1) a (set of) constitutive principle(s) that make meaningful interaction possible, and (2) an associated set of practices by which the constitutive principles are reproduced at a given point in time' (Knudsen, 2013: 16). From this proposition he deduces that while some principles might be deposited as material organization, others will remain at the level of commonly understood practices. Great power management and diplomacy are obvious examples. Great power management is reproduced in the Security Council; as Knudsen (2013:15) writes: 'The constitutive and organizing importance of the UN and its Security Council to great-power management is plain to see'. But the norm also exists independently of the Security Council, and the practice also goes on outside it. (In his paper he does not give examples of this, but they are not hard to find; for example, the role of Germany, not a permanent member of the Security Council, in the construction of the 'New Europe' after the collapse of communism, 'coalitions of the willing', and the present obsession with 'rising powers'). With regard to diplomacy, some of its principles have been deposited in the organization of the resident embassy and the established rules of diplomatic exchange, but others remain at the level of commonly understood practices.

These distinctions provided Knudsen with an all-important *proto theory of change*. Knudsen (2013: 16-17) writes:

Consequently, institutional continuity is represented by the ongoing reproduction of one or more constitutive principles which are preconditions of meaningful interaction (order, justice, international society as such), while institutional change can be understood as (A) changes in the practices by which the constitutive principles are reproduced or maintained (= change in a fundamental institution), or in rare cases, (B) changes in the constitutive principles themselves (= change of a fundamental institution).

One implication of this understanding is clear: the workings of international organizations can introduce change into the primary or foundational institutions. He relates his own conception back to the Wendt and Duval argument 'that although fundamental institutions are more constitutive of interaction, making things possible, while international organizations are more constraining, both types of institutions have both qualities' (Knudsen 2013:15).

In the meantime, and quite independently of the ISA working group, a young scholar at Tübingen was preparing a thesis on the evolution of diplomatic practices and institutions in South East Asia. A constructivist in orientation, Kilian Spandler automatically cancels out power and power shifts as the fundament for understanding change in such practices, much less 'interests'. But he is clearly not satisfied with a purely ideational account, not even in the variants of idealism provided by post-structuralism. He wants to develop some kind of political process theory of the constitutive effects of secondary institutions; that is, a theory in which secondary institutions have some independent effects, but that do not float on some cloud of ideas, not even those that were tied to systems of production, or interests, or power. In casting about, he fell upon Buzan and the 'correction' Buzan was attempting in the understanding of the evolution of secondary institutions. He also fell upon the

English School and the notion of primary institutions as practices. Beginning with a critique of the English School, he began to develop a model of the relations between primary and secondary institutions that envisioned a process of interaction between them, linked by a politics of practice, and that he could use to explain change in the diplomatic institutions of East Asia.

His critique of the English School essentially revolves around the isolation into which the original ES theorists had consigned their primary institutions, apparently to be untouched by change. Secondly, he takes on the constitutive/regulative distinction and the idea that some institutions are constitutive while others are merely regulative, noting how widespread the distinction had become (Spandler, 2015: 9; the relevant footnote points to Reus-Smit (1997) who differentiates between fundamental institutions and issue-specific regimes; Kal Holsti (2004) who distinguishes between foundational and procedural institutions; and Dunne (2001) who separates constitutive norms from more specific rules). Having noted it, however, he rejects it, observing that secondary institutions are not only more dynamic, they are also much more constitutive of international order than the classic picture portrays, exactly echoing Knudsen's view. At this point he begins to construct his own model, part of the stated aim being to 'establish international organisations and regimes as a crucial part of the English School agenda'. It also aims to enlighten 'the political mechanisms that lead to continuity and change in international institutions' and account for 'the political nature of change in international society more broadly' (Spandler, 2015: 1, 4).

In his own account of the relations of primary and secondary institutions, Buzan was bothered by the possible identity between *constituting* and *regulating*, and the difficulty of distinguishing them in practice. He preferred to 'nest' some practices in others, referring to those that 'stand alone' as the primary institutions and to the others as 'derivative' (Buzan 2004: 178-81, 187), an orientation he does not depart from in *Introduction*. The Spandler model gets around this difficulty by distinguishing two kinds of constituting. To Constitutionalism 1, he assigns the basic definition of

actors and the specification of legitimate behavior, while Constitutionalism 2 involves role ascription and sanctioning and 'altering of preference structures'; that is, elements of regulation (2015:11-12). These are speech acts in Searle's sense, carrying forward Buzan's understanding of them but it also points to the different aspects of constituting, something like Buzan's 'derivative' institutions, but with a much clearer specification of their nature. Spandler also clarifies where these activities are located, in the continuous reproduction of them by the 'players'. The 'basic rules', in Buzan's terms, do not exist apart from their reproduction by the players. Secondly, Spandler does not use the term regulating, but rather institutionalizing; if Constitutionalism 2 takes on the form of a rule within an institutional structure (a secondary institution in Buzan's terms) it becomes institutionalized (2015: 11). The basic premise of the Spandler model is that secondary institutions, as well as primary institutions, are constitutive of international practice, but they are so *in different ways*. Primary institutions are the source of Constitutionalism 1—the definition of actors and legitimate behavior. But importantly, 'secondary institutions are constitutive as well, namely by ascribing differentiated roles to actors and by empowering them to engage in specific forms of interaction that would not be possible without the existence of those institutions' (Spandler, 2015: 11). The process is modeled in a two-tiered structure in which primary institutions send down Constitutionalism 1 as well as elements of institutionalization, while secondary institutions—international organisations and regimes—send up Constitutionalism 2. It is an elaboration of the Buzan model that solves the problem of the agent-structure confusion.

It is set in motion by exogenous shocks: what sets the whole process going in Spandler's schema are major wars, radical shifts in the distribution of power, or waves of decolonialization (2015: 18-20). Critical shocks push the processes of constitutionalization and institutionalization, leading to elaboration but also to restrictions. Importantly, shocks also introduce legitimation shift in the primary institutions, which will be institutionalized by iteration. Timing and context is thus decisive for institutional development. He writes: 'When and in what institutional context critical shocks

appear will greatly affect the forms secondary institutions will take' (2015: 20). There is thus an inevitable historical aspect to any account of international society and its social forms. Historicizing allows the analyst to identify those 'political mechanisms that lead to continuity and change in international institutions', which, as Holsti (2009: 145) reminds is the ultimate objective of the English School. And it all started with Buzan's distinction between primary and secondary institutions.

In the final chapter of his *Introduction to the English School*, Buzan establishes a future research agenda which gives his own way forward. In it he returns to the functional method used by Bull to identify the 'necessary ingredients for order'; that is, asking what any functioning system would require to produce the desired outcome. He makes the cogent criticism that '[h]uman societies can be ...almost endlessly inventive about the social forms...they generate' (Buzan, 2014: 175), and that no fixed set of primary institutions could be derived from a functional method. He then turns to Holsti, from whose work he derived the original inspiration for the institutional focus of his 2004 work, and who provided a set of criteria for identifying primary institutions through their presenting characteristics—the classic empirical method. These are he reminds us: (i) patterned, recurrent practices; which are (ii) framed by coherent sets of ideas that make them purposive; and (iii) supported by norms and rules that prescribe and proscribe legitimate behavior (Buzan, 2014: 176). He supports the classical empirical method, despite his own evident longing for a definition with 'fixed bookends', and has accepted the inevitability of historical change in primary institutions and (though less emphatically) the requirement to search out practices in historical processes (Buzan, 2014: 170, 175, 178). He also supports the suggestion that secondary institutions might well be a source for identifying the norms and rules that support primary institutions (Buzan, 2014: 176). With this agenda, the present writer is in whole-hearted agreement.

Taking the English School Forward

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Let me start by thanking all the participants in this forum for their careful reading and thoughtful appraisal of my work, and especially Peter Wilson who organised what was originally a conference panel into a journal forum. I have very few quibbles with how the participants have represented what I have said, and overall I am pleased that the book has been broadly received as fit for its intended purpose. That comes as something of a relief, because as Peter Wilson notes, I was not the obvious choice to author a book introducing the English School. I am a latecomer to its ranks, and although I have a pretty good command of its literature, my own work is very much to one side of its mainstream. I might even be placed, as Wilson suggests, outside the English School, though I think – and hope – that that is a minority view. To offset this handicap, I submitted both the book proposal and the penultimate draft to a substantial cross-section of ES scholars, and paid close attention to their comments at both stages. All of them found the book broadly fair and representative even if it was not much like what they would have written had they taken the job. But I certainly accept that nothing is more difficult than taking a detached and impersonal view of things in which one is deeply involved. This book, as the participants in this forum have rightly and ruthlessly pointed out, still bears the distinctive marks of my authorship, most notably in its preference for structural approaches.

In what follows I will concentrate mainly on engaging with the key points of comment and criticism, either by contesting them, or by accepting them and trying to develop them further. Mainly the participants take lines independent of each other, so except where the overlap is large, I will organise my responses loosely author by author. If there is a core theme to my remarks, it is perhaps

that one of the things that makes the English School so compelling is the wealth of interesting topics both empirical and theoretical that remain to be engaged if its development is to be taken forward. If my book plays a useful role in identifying elements of that agenda, and inspiring others to take them up, then it will have fulfilled the ambitions I had for it.

Yongjin Zhang adopts the elegant approach of the classical English School by organising his comments into sets of threes, and his explanations of what I was trying to do are often clearer than my own. He rightly notes that I have been unable to escape my structural inclinations even when discussing the normative side of the English School. He also rightly observes that contesting the drift towards a solidarist *versus* pluralist perspective in the English School's self-understanding, and setting it up in spectrum form as 'and' rather than 'versus', has been a core theme of my engagement with the English School. It was a passing comment by Molly Cochran that set me thinking along those lines, and in the end it became a major structuring device for the whole book. One consequence of both this concern, and my structural predilections, has been, as Zhang correctly points out, to develop a definition of solidarism that some, perhaps most, of those committed to a normative approach to the English School find uncomfortably wide. Although in my view, the differentiation between *state-centric* and *cosmopolitan* solidarism solves a lot of problems and misunderstandings, it also threatens hard line positions within both pluralism and solidarism. There is perhaps a case for staging within the English School a debate about the standing of state-centric solidarism. It seems to me undeniable not only that such a thing exists in practice, but also, and more arguably, that it occupies a bigger and more important space than what then become the extreme ends of pluralism and cosmopolitan solidarism. Perhaps another label would be preferable, but whatever this thing is called, it needs to be integrated into English School concepts and theory. It can be repositioned and renamed, but it cannot be ignored or eliminated.

Zhang is also right to pick up my remark about seeing the pluralist-solidarist formulation as having similarities to the East Asia formulation of *yin-yang* relationality, where each side in a dyad (dark/light, male/female, active/passive, open/closed, etc.) is necessarily present in the other. Opposites cannot exist alone. He begins to open up an extension of this link by suggesting that pluralism is historically *yang*, and solidarism more *yin*. I had not thought about developing the comparison along those lines – and would not have had the knowledge to do so even if I had thought of it – so this opens up another dimension that is well worth exploring in more depth. Here, perhaps, is an opportunity for English School scholars from Asia, who are more likely than Westerners to have a solid understanding of *yin/yang* dialectics. Developing the linkages between *yin/yang* and *pluralism/solidarism* would not only deepen the understanding of all within the English School about this dyad, but also open a door into Western discourses for East Asian theorizing, and perhaps help to increase the understanding of, and interest in, the English School approach to International Relations in East Asia.

Tonny Brems Knudsen focuses on two questions:

1. how can primary institutions be open for change and yet continue to serve as pillars of modern international society? and
2. what are the limits to solidarist international change?

On the first he argues that the core Westphalian institutions cannot disappear without undoing the whole society of states, and so sees colonialism and slavery as a somehow more dispensable form of institution. On this point I find Knudsen too wedded conceptually to the Westphalian/Western model of international society. In this he is close to Bull, whose framework almost conflated the idea of international society itself with that model. My view of international society, as noted by Zhang, is much more fluid and open. I can imagine an international society even where sovereignty and territoriality had become obsolete. All that is required is some form of multi-actor system in which the actors have a significant degree of autonomy, and also seek some degree of order in their

relationships. A system of sovereign states is one form of this but not the only one. Systems of empires or tribes would also qualify. I therefore think that, like many in the classical English School, Knudsen underestimates the importance of the disappearance of colonialism as an institution. That disappearance involved the delegitimation and disappearance of both empires as the core actors of international society, and colonialism as a legitimate practice. Empires have been something of a skeleton in the closet for the classical English School, which like the rest of IR has focused on systems of states. But up until 1945, empires were arguably the dominant form of actor in the international system/society, and once that is understood Bull's classical set also look more vulnerable. Knudson cannot escape the fact that core primary institutions do sometimes disappear. In my view no primary institution is sacred, and order is dependent only on the existence of some such institutions, not on any particular ones.

Also on the first question, and proposed as a solution to the dilemma of order/change, Knudsen, and also Cornelia Navari in this forum, and others elsewhere, promotes a distinction between *constitutive principles* (durable) and *associated practices* (which though reproducing the institution, are often changing). To the extent that the distinction between *constitutive principles* and *associated practices* is compatible with Holsti's (2004) distinction between 'changes of' versus 'changes in' primary institutions, I have no difficulty with it. I also agree with him and Navari that the principles/practices distinction is a good way into exploring the relationship between primary and secondary institutions. Navari's contribution below is a useful introduction to the work that is now beginning to address this important question, showing how primary institutions enable secondary ones, and secondary ones are seen as part of the reproductive practices of primary ones.

On the second question, although Knudsen buys the opening up to state-centric solidarism, he nevertheless argues from both Lauterpacht and from empirical practice, that individuals are now acknowledged as carriers of rights and responsibilities, most notably human rights. This goes much

further than being a mere extension of state sovereignty, and reflects the development, up to a point, of genuine cosmopolitan solidarism. Given the limits of my current knowledge about international law, I am not sure about the validity of this argument, though I can see that the case for it has significant foundations. It should be a key point of enquiry and debate for the English School, because confirmation of it would have big consequence for how we understand the nature of contemporary international society. As Knudsen hints, if confirmed, it would make international society contain more than one type of legitimate player, or member, and open up interesting vistas for progressive thinkers. At the same time, its cost would perhaps be somewhat greater than he hints. As well as the everyday differences and contestations he acknowledges, this move might well deepen what could be a constitutive gulf within interstate society between those states that accept a cosmopolitan version of human rights, and those, most notably China, that do not. In this sense, it risks re-opening the zero-sum perspective on pluralism and solidarism.

Part of any debate about this could be an enquiry into the neglected question of what constitute primary institutions in *world society*? Secondary institutions in world society are pretty clear in the form of international nongovernmental organizations and innumerable forms of transnational networks, which might be seen as the functional equivalent of regimes in interstate society. But what the equivalent of primary institutions might be remains largely unexplored. My taxonomical formulations pose the interstate, transnational and interhuman domains as conceptually separate, which leads to asking questions about what kind of institutions one might find within each domain. Knudsen argues that what we are seeing is the emergence of a hybrid international society, and that the structure of primary and secondary institutions increasingly reflects that. I think there is perhaps still room for thinking in terms of separate domains, but Knudsen opens the possibility that a more important, and more likely, prospect is that these domains will become increasingly conflated in hybrid forms of international/world society. He could be right. If so, that would put a different twist on the nature of the enquiry into how to identify the primary institutions of world society.

Peter Wilson opens with a rejection of the ‘reconvening’ idea from the late 1990s. For the record it is worth noting that that aspect of the initiative – the idea of recreating something like the British Committee’s formal structure of regular discussion meetings – anyway failed when the ESRC refused my application to fund it. They did so on the grounds that the English School was ‘too English’, which was such an idiotic response as to close the door on that idea. He then takes me to task for not fully understanding Carr as a forerunner of *raison de système*, and for missing the significant contribution of English School writers to the history of ideas. These are both fair points, and the latter might make an interesting book project for someone better versed in political theory than I am.

Wilson’s main critique is about how to ground the primary institutions of international society. He and I have sparred on this point for some time. We certainly agree that it is a central problem for the English School, though we go in different directions about how best to address it. The book contains a fairly detailed review of the different approaches to it, including Wilson’s. He and I even agree that for now, the only viable approach to identifying primary institutions is an empirical one. Lacking any better idea at the moment, and aware that this problem is far from having been resolved, I am happy for my work to be judged on the consistency (or not) between my definitions and the evidence offered for practices that meet those criteria. I am aware of the defects and limitations of this position, and I accept many of the critiques of it. But I am strongly confident that primary institutions do exist, both because so many other serious thinkers orbit around the concept in one form or another, and because without such a concept the idea of society itself becomes void – as indeed does the English School. The problem is not about whether such institutions exist or not, it is about how best to analyse them. Wilson’s idea is to adopt a Manning-like approach of trying to see how statespersons see them. My preference, in sympathy with Navari’s and Knudsen’s arguments, would be for a more structural approach, looking for indications of primary institutions in the

constitutions and practices of secondary ones. Having been unable to crack this nut myself, I am deeply glad to see others take up the task.

Paul Sharp indulges himself in a characterisation of realism as a racing shell, fast, slim and full of purpose; liberalism as a cruise ship with a stratified class structure; and the English School as a rather ramshackle houseboat with a fragile structure and little sense of direction. His nautical metaphor appeals to my boyish interest in ships, and I would perhaps take this game back to the first half of the 20th century. From that perspective, realism might be seen as a dreadnought battleship: fast, bristling with heavy guns, clad in thick armour, visually impressive, and mistakenly thought to be the ultimate weapon of its day, though in fact highly vulnerable to attack both from underwater by submarines and from the sky by aircraft. Liberalism might best be thought of not as a cruise ship, whose itinerary is meandering, but as a liner in a rule-bound system operating with a firm sense of direction. Being rather splendid vessels, both the dreadnought (like the *USS Arizona*, *HMS Hood*, the German battleship *Bismark*, and the Japanese one *Yamato*) and the liner (think of the *Titanic* and the *Lusitania*) make a dramatic impact when sunk. In this perspective the English School might best be thought of as a tramp steamer, with a polyglot crew and a mixed cargo, steaming from place to place in search for trading opportunities, and generally tying together the system of world trade. The tramp steamer requires and reflects a loose general framework of order. The individual vessels are generally sturdy, but mundane and pass without notice. Their collective absence, however, would create a crisis across the system. Perhaps the fragile and leaky houseboat is a better characterization for the post-structuralist's vessel?

Sharp rightly raises the danger posed by my book (and others of the systematizing genre) of imposing a single orthodoxy or interpretation onto a diverse body of thought and people. This is an especial danger if the essence of the ES is, as he puts it, to value 'the ambiguities, limitations and consequences of the ways in which both practitioners and theorists think about international

relations'. It is partly a generic problem embedded in the nature of the enterprise, and partly also linked to the worry discussed earlier about my either being outside the English School mainstream, or possibly outside the English School altogether. This is a fair point, and all I can say is that I am happy to be part of an ongoing dialectic between 'builders' and 'interpreters', and being on the side of the systematisers, to challenge the interpreters to improve their act.

When Sharp advocates at the end of his piece that ES types should just relax and get on with pursuing whatever ideas and puzzles they find interesting, I am happy to agree, for that in my view is where creativity is most likely to come from. But I think he misses one strength of the ES, which is also one of the good reasons for producing systematising reflections about it. That strength is the extraordinary richness of research topics on offer within the ES, ranging from highly abstract theoretical questions (e.g. about the nature of primary institutions) to quite specific empirical ones (e.g. about the history and structure of international societies other than the current one, or about the numerous encounter stories yet to be told, especially from the perspective of those subjected to the encounter). This richness is, in my view a huge resource for the ES in attracting PhD students, and contrasts with the shrinking appeal of narrow, mid-range, methodologically driven research prospects into which neorealism and neoliberalism have driven themselves. Sharp's take on the English School, although insightful, is to my mind, and like Knudsen's, in some ways a bit too backward looking and Western-parochial. Perhaps the big future for the ES lies not in the Anglosphere from which it came, but in the rest of the world, which is eager to get its own histories and political philosophies into the game of IR. If I am right about this, then the name 'English School' may become increasingly misrepresentative, even ironic. That, in my view, would be a profoundly welcome development.

As already discussed above, I am strongly sympathetic to the general direction of work pointed to by Cornelia Navari. I would make only one niggling quibble about the misrepresentation of my view (p.

8 of the draft) as saying that like Bull, I assigned 'to primary institutions only constitutive principles, and to secondary institutions only the regulative processes'. In my 2004 (p. 180) book I quite explicitly opened the door that she and Knudsen want to walk through, and Spandler seems to have done already, by noting that those who study secondary institutions make plausible claims that such institutions have constitutive effects on the states that compose their memberships. I was, and remain, unconvinced by the established assumption that a clear distinction can be made between constitutive and regulatory rules, and I agree fully that this problem needs a better quality of attention than it has received so far.

To conclude, let me once again thank the participants for their stimulating engagement, and take up Knudsen's implication that I should do the work of taking my argument beyond the pluralist/state-centric solidarist nexus by opening into the cosmopolitan part of solidarism as well. I can certainly agree that this should be explored, but whether at this increasingly late stage in my career I have either the time or the energy to do so, is a question. Fortunately, the English School seems to be in pretty good shape, with an increasingly impressive number, range and depth of scholars across the generations and across the planet attracted to its perspective and tradition. I am confident that good and important questions like these will be addressed and debated regardless of whether it is me or someone else who takes them forward.

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