

[Barry Buzan](#)

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The English School: A Neglected Approach to International Security Studies¹

Barry Buzan

LSE

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Barry Buzan is Emeritus Professor in the Department of International Relations at LSE, a Senior Research Associate at LSE IDEAS, and a Fellow of the British Academy. He was formerly Montague Burton Professor in the IR Department at LSE. Among his books are: with Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1998); with Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers* (2003); *From International to World Society?* (2004); with Lene Hansen, *The Evolution of International Security Studies* (2009); and *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations* (2014).

Abstract: The terms ‘English School’ (ES) and ‘international security’ seldom appear in the same sentence. Yet the ES can and should constitute a general approach to International Security Studies (ISS) comparable to realism, liberalism, constructivism and several other approaches to IR. The article begins by sketching out how the ES’s idea of *raison de système* provides a general framing for ISS that counterpoints approaches focused on *raison d’état*. It then shows how the ES’s societal approach provides specific insights that could strengthen analysis of international security: by providing a normative framing for securitization; by showing the historical variability of key ISS concepts such as war, balance of power and human rights; by adding an inside/outside dimension to security relations based on differentiations within international society; and by complementing regional approaches to international security with its societal approach. The article aims to initiate a conversation between the ES and ISS by showing where the fruitful links are, and by introducing the relevant ES literature to ISS scholars.

Key Words: English School, International Security Studies, primary institutions, realism, liberalism, constructivism

¹ This paper builds on my earlier work on this topic (Buzan 1996, 2010b), and some material is drawn from Buzan (2014) and reworked to fit this theme. I am grateful to several colleagues at the LSE and Copenhagen for their penetrating comments on an earlier draft, and also to the editors and two reviewers at *Security Dialogue*.

Introduction

Few people working within International Security Studies (ISS) would think about the English school (ES) as a body of either theory or empirical writing relevant to their work. This is certainly true for mainstream traditionalists with their focus on conflict/disorder, realism and *raison d'état*, but it is also true for the wide array of widening and deepening approaches to ISS that have gathered force since the 1980s, including constructivists, postcolonialists, critical security studies, feminists, poststructuralists, and human security.² I argue that this mutual neglect between ISS and the ES is a mistake. There are many synergies between them, which both sides would benefit from exploring. This article is thus in the 'bridge-building' tradition exemplified by Strange (1970), MacLean (1988), and Buzan (1993). Bridge-building is only possible if the foundations on either side are firm, so I do not intend to engage here in reformist discussion about either ISS or the ES. I take both as given on the basis of recently published synoptic studies (Buzan and Hansen, 2009; Buzan, 2014). These studies set out a broad view of both as basically incorporating all those who think of themselves as participants in the discussions, respectively, about international security and international society.

At first glance, the ES might not look at all relevant to ISS traditionalists, and perhaps only marginally so to many of the wideners and deepeners. With its concerns about order (Bull, 1977), legitimacy (Clark, 2005), and what Watson (1992: 14) called *raison de système*, ('the belief that it pays to make the system work'), the ES is easily seen as too liberal for those focusing on *raison d'état*, and too state-centric for those focusing on critical security studies and human security. Although the ES's defining triad of concepts – *international system*, *international society*, and *world society* – does incorporate a realist, *raison d'état*, element, in practice the great bulk of ES work has focused on international and world society and on the rules, norms, and institutions that underpin *raison de système* and the social order of international society. Nevertheless, quite a few writers within the ES have explicitly addressed elements of the ISS agenda both on the state-centric and human security ends. Longstanding ES concerns about both the stability of international society (Bull, 1977; Bull and Watson, 1984), and also about its inequity (Bull, 1984b; Keene, 2002; Keal, 2003) can be read as security discussions about international society as a whole and/or about the insecurity of those disadvantageously positioned with it. There is some discussion of collective security in classic ES texts (Bull, 1977: 238ff.; Hudson, 1966). In addition, Hedley Bull's (1961, 1977) works on arms control, war and the balance of power; Herbert Butterfield's (1951, 1966) on the security dilemma

² For a full setting out of the many strands within ISS, and how they have evolved in relation to each other, see Buzan and Hansen (2009).

and the balance of power; and Nicholas Wheeler's (2013; also Booth and Wheeler, 2008; Hurrell, 2007a) work on the security dilemma, all count in this way. There is plenty of ES literature that addresses both these and other ISS topics ranging from human rights, through nationalism, to identity security. There is, indeed, a small group of ES authors who have made explicit links between ES thinking and ISS (Buzan, 1996, 2010; Makinda, 1997, 1998; Bain, 2001; Bellamy and McDonald, 2004; Dunne and Wheeler, 2004; Williams, 2004). But despite these efforts, no bridge has been built. In their detailed survey of ISS, Buzan and Hansen (2009), despite taking a broad view of the field, did not mention the ES as part of what should be considered, and in relation to how ISS has evolved so far, that seems a correct judgment. Although there is substantive overlap, there has been little systematic interweaving of the discourses about international security and international society.

What follows is about how and why the bridge should be built. In the next section I show how the ES, like some other IR theories, can be used to advantage as a general framing for ISS. I then show a variety of ways in which specific ES concepts and perspectives can add value to international security analysis. The main aim of article is to initiate a conversation between the ES and ISS by introducing the relevant ES literature to ISS scholars, and showing how they would benefit from reading it.

The English School as a Distinctive General Framing for International Security Studies

The sub-field of ISS does not stand by itself but is linked within IR not only to the broader theoretical approaches of realism, liberalism and constructivism/poststructuralism, but also to most of the many analytical and theoretical strands within IR including feminism, postcolonialism and Marxism. This pattern of widespread and significant engagements of IR with international security makes the detachment between ISS and the ES strikingly anomalous. The main way for the many strands of IR to engage with ISS is to provide a general framing within which to analyse the *problematique* of international security.

Realism provides a state-centric, power-political understanding containing an assumption of conflict as a permanent condition of world politics. This links tightly to the traditional ISS core of Strategic Studies, which focuses on the state ('national security'/*raison d'état*) and sees threats and responses largely in military terms. Realism provides a complementary and permanent niche for Strategic Studies as the site where the political and military sectors are closely linked, and expertise on military matters can speak to the wider

discipline of IR. It also supports state-centric approaches to security more broadly. The Strategic Studies approach defined security in close relation to war as a regular feature of international relations, and put strategy, the use and threat of force, and the arms dynamic, on centre stage. This is a good fit with realism's privileging of war as the main shaping dynamic of both states and international systems. Because the use of force among states easily has existential implications for them, the traditional approach to security set a high hurdle for any kind of threat to count as an international security issue, and this formative influence has endured even as the international security agenda has spread beyond military issues (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998; Buzan and Hansen, 2009).

Liberalism also provides a framing for ISS, though with its emphasis on intergovernmental and transnational institutions, cooperation, and joint gains, its framing provides possible ameliorations of and/or exits from the 'permanent' conflicts and security dilemmas of the realist world. In a contradictory way, liberalism has become more influential as an approach to ISS as a result of the widening of the security agenda starting in the 1970s. Great power war seemed to become ever less likely, and the intricacies of nuclear deterrence logic seemed to have reached theoretical exhaustion. As globalization intensified, a non-military agenda of international security began to appear: economic security, environmental security, societal (or identity) security, and more recently cyber-security. This was a dark irony. 'Real existing liberalism' seemed to have delivered on its promise to reduce the threat of great power war, but only at the price of generating a new, and socially more pervasive and invasive, security agenda dominated by non-military issues. This wider agenda opened the way for many other IR approaches to engage with the international security agenda.

Constructivists moved into ISS during the 1990s, bringing to it their distinctive approach to social processes through ontology and epistemology. The relationship between constructivism and ISS is too complex and multi-faceted to tell here,³ but a few key points will suffice. While realism and liberalism both offer a clear picture of what international society does or should look like, constructivism generally does not. Wendt (1999), exceptionally, does give a useful sketch of international social orders, and his typology of Hobbesian, Lockean and Kantian shows clear derivation from the ES's longstanding triad of Hobbesian, Grotian and Kantian. His differentiation around relationships of friend, rival, and enemy, and the social logics of belief, calculation and coercion, clearly has resonance with international security, but his triad gives only a coarse-grained view of international social structure. Constructivism offered mainly a methodological re-basing for ISS as its general framing. Many mainstream constructivists followed Katzenstein's (1996) lead,

³ See Buzan and Hansen 2009: 187-225 for a detailed account.

which adopted 'security' as the 'hard case' where constructivist theories emphasising ideas, culture, norms and identity presented a counterpoint to the materialist analyses of neorealism and neoliberalism, albeit largely within the traditionalist state-centric framing. These constructivists looked mainly to fill-in where realist and liberal explanations could not cover observed behaviour. A more critical strand of constructivism looked to collectivities other than the state, yet also mostly remained concerned with military security.

Poststructuralists focused on the concept of security as a discursive construct, and on the 'Other' as necessary to the identity of the state. Feminists inserted gender as a key factor in understanding the dynamics of security practices. Postcolonialists offered the structural inequalities of a core-periphery system as the main backdrop to thinking about international security. Some Marxists offered uneven and combined development as an explanation for war (Rosenberg, 2013). Picking up from earlier strands of Peace Research, Critical Theorists foregrounded humans and emancipatory values, rather than the state and *raison d'état*, as the referent object for international security. The Copenhagen School highlighted the process of *securitisation* (the social processes by which groups of people construct something as a threat) thus offering a constructivism-all-the-way-down counterpoint to the materialist threat analysis of traditional Strategic Studies and realism. In this context, the Copenhagen School was also active in opening the scope of security analysis to deal not just with military issues, but where relevant those across a wider range of sectors: economic, political, societal/identity and environmental.

Inasmuch as the ES is essentially a societal approach to the study of IR, it shares ground with constructivism, though its overall approach and method are quite different, drawing mainly on history, political theory, and law (Buzan, 2014: 32-6). The ES's societal approach to international relations, particularly its feature concept of the *primary institutions* of international society, offers a clear and detailed picture of what international society does and could look like. Primary institutions are deep, organic, evolved ideas and practices that constitute both the players and the game of international relations. Within the context of modern European history they include sovereignty, territoriality, balance of power, war, international law, diplomacy, nationalism, great power management, human equality, development and the market. These primary institutions define both the rightful, legitimate membership of, and rightful, legitimate behaviour within, international society.⁴ Since it was the form of international society that emerged in Europe that was imposed on the rest of the international system, it is these institutions that dominate discussion. But it

⁴ This understanding of 'institutions' is quite different from that used by regime theorists and liberal institutionalists who focus mainly on instrumental and constructed arrangements such as intergovernmental organizations and regimes, which I call *secondary institutions* (Buzan 2004: 161–204).

should be kept in mind that many other kinds of primary institution can exist, and in some cases have existed historically (Wight, 1977; Watson, 1992; Zhang, 2009). Primary institutions change and play into each other in complex ways: for example, early modern Europe had primary institutions that became obsolete during the 19th and 20th centuries, most notably dynasticism, human inequality and imperialism/colonialism.⁵

International society seen as a social structure of primary institutions can serve as a general framing for ISS. In a nutshell, neorealism sees a world of enemies and rivals following a logic of power, pursuing relative gains and *raison d'état* by means of coercion and calculation; and neoliberalism sees a world of rational actors, again following a logic of *raison d'état*, but pursuing absolute gains, and continuously calculating about potential shared interests and joint gains. The ES framing, especially from the pluralist wing, is also largely state-centric. It agrees with Wendt in admitting the possibility of friends, and adding belief to the logics of coercion and calculation. It also gives *raison de système* equal billing alongside *raison d'état*. But the solidarist wing of the ES, with its interest in world society, also speaks to those concerned with critical and human security. And because it emphasises shared values as the basis of primary institutions, the ES shares ground with the constructivist and poststructuralist interest in identity. In this sense, the ES incorporates both the realist and liberal framings, adds a social and affective element to the mix, and contextualises them in a range of possible types of international society that offer much more depth and detail than Wendt's rather general scheme. Different mixtures of primary institutions produce different types of international society, which in turn generate and support different logics of anarchy and (in)security. The ES approach puts into systematic form the general proposition that there is not just one logic of anarchy, as realism suggests, but many (Buzan, 2007 [1991], 2004b; Buzan *et al.*, 1993; Wendt, 1992, 1999; Clark, 2005).

Whether as abstract models or as world historical cases, there are many possible ways of constructing typologies of international societies. But for illustrative purposes I will stick with a simple ideal-type model broadly based on Western history and offering four general forms: power political, coexistence,

⁵ The ES's theorization of primary institutions remains underdeveloped, with identification of them remaining largely definitional and empirical. There has been some progress on definition, but no success in finding an abstract delimitation of a general set. In this, the ES is in the same boat as functionalists, those who talk about 'sectors', and functional differentiation theory. While some general types can be identified, there is as yet no theoretical basis for defining the whole possible set, and some reason to think that the attempt to capture this kind of differentiation in a comprehensive abstraction cannot succeed. For function systems, sectors, and primary institutions, the basic mechanism of identification thus remains definition plus empirical observation. For detailed discussion see Buzan (2014: 172-8).

cooperative and convergence. These types progress along a spectrum from a pluralist, rather minimal, thin international society to one that is solidarist, extensive, elaborate and thick (Buzan, 2004: 139-60). These four models do not represent fixed sets of primary institutions, and could in principle be realised through a variety of combinations of primary institutions, but here I largely draw on available historical examples.

- *Power Political* represents an international society based largely on enmity and the possibility of war, but where there is also some diplomacy, alliance making and trade. Survival is the main motive for the states, and few values are shared. Institutions will therefore be minimal, mostly confined to rules of war, recognition, trade and diplomacy. In this model *raison d'état* is strong, and *raison de système* weak. Quite a bit of ancient and classical history looks like this, as does some early modern and modern European history. The units composing such a society may be empires, city-states, and nomadic barbarians, as well as states in the modern sense. This model is much the same as Wendt's (1999) Hobbesian one and the traditional English School's 'international system' or realist pillar, likewise often labelled Hobbesian.
- *Coexistence* represents an international society based on a logic of mutual survival and a limited pursuit of order. It is often called 'Westphalian' or Grotian, though in fact it refers more to 19th century Europe, in which the core institutions of interstate society were balance of power, sovereignty, territoriality, diplomacy, great power management, war and international law. In this model *raison d'état* remains strong, but *raison de système* becomes moderate. It occupies some of the zone taken by Wendt's (1999: 279-97) uncomfortably broad Lockean category. The units do not want to be at war all the time and so seek some degree of international order. But they remain distinct, self-centred, wilfully differentiated from each other by culture and politics, and not infrequently warlike. They wish to retain their individuality and independence, and during the 19th century nationalism arose as a new primary institution, normatively reinforcing sovereignty and non-intervention to this end (Mayall, 1990).
- *Cooperative* represents an international society in which the units seek not just coexistence, but in addition a level of order sufficient to pursue some joint projects (e.g., a world economy, human rights, big science, global environmental management). It requires developments that go significantly beyond a logic of coexistence, but short of extensive political integration. It might come in many guises, depending on what type of values are shared and how/why they are shared, though the standard model here is based on liberal values. In this model *raison d'état* becomes moderate, and *raison de système* strong, initially in the liberal model around the need to manage a shared international economy. Cooperation neither requires nor excludes broad ideological agreement: instrumental commitments to specific projects will

suffice. The contemporary commitment to the market is a good example, with many politically illiberal and non-democratic countries willing to play by international market rules. A cooperative international society will almost certainly restrict the legitimacy of war as a practice, and other institutions (e.g. environmental stewardship) might arise to reflect the joint solidarist project(s).

- *Convergence* represents an international society in which the development of a substantial enough range of shared values among a set of states makes them adopt similar political, legal, and economic rules and structures, and to aspire to be more alike, and up to a point more integrated. In other words, states begin to share an identity, but not sufficiently to want to give up entirely their independence. In this model *raison d'état* becomes weak, and *raison de système* very strong. The obvious examples here are the EU and democratic peace theory, but in principle, any shared basis of identity could underpin convergence. The range of shared values simply has to be wide enough and substantial enough to generate similar forms of government (liberal democracies, Muslim theocracies, Communist totalitarianisms) and legal systems based on similar values in respect of such basic issues as property rights, human rights, and the relationship between government and citizens. Under convergence, one would expect quite radical changes in the pattern of both primary and secondary institutions.

It is immediately apparent from this spectrum that the dominant type of international society has huge consequences for what the agenda of international security will look like. Life within a power political international society will be extremely different from life in an international society characterized by logics of cooperation or convergence. It is also clear that these international societies represent forms of social order quite distinct from both the materialist sense of order represented by the distribution of power in neorealism and the rational choice order represented by neoliberalism. In a sense, realist assumptions are confined within the power political and coexistence models, and pay attention only to some of the primary institutions that define those models, most obviously sovereignty and balance of power. Neoliberal assumptions allow for cooperation, but assume only a kind of economic instrumental rationality rather than actual shared values or identity. The classical ES view of coexistence international societies, like the realist one, stresses great powers, war, and balance of power as key institutions of the social order. But in cooperative and convergence international societies of almost any conceivable sort, the legitimacy of war and the balance of power will be marginalised or eliminated. This does not, of course, mean that such societies have no security agenda. As one can see from the contemporary practice of the EU or the liberal international economic order, security concerns move away from the traditional military ones towards

economic, societal, and environmental ones, as well as towards a human security agenda.

Primary institutions are durable rather than permanent, and therefore international societies are in a constant state of evolution, albeit generally slow (Holsti, 2004; Buzan, 2014: 97-112, 134-63). The social structure represented by international society can vary in form, and also in distribution: it may be universal or regional, and if universal, may still have differentiations of degree within it – think of the EU within the West, and the West within global international society. The idea of international society adds a very useful macro-social level as a key framing for international security. Given the logic of *raison de système*, international society itself, whether global or regional, can become a referent object for security in a way that is absent from realism, and only narrowly cast in terms of intergovernmental organizations in liberalism. Elements of such a macro-securitization played importantly in both the Cold War, which was a clash between rival models of international society, and the global war on terrorism, which revived the classical international society trope of ‘civilized’ versus ‘barbarian’. So the first move in linking ES thinking to ISS is to extend the frame of security analysis to include both affective relationships and threats to wider social structures. This makes international society as a whole, and specific primary institutions within it, both referent objects of security and a general framing within which the process of securitization can be understood. In this sense, international society provides specific and empirically observable content for the otherwise hopelessly vague term ‘international security’ (Buzan, 1991).

In one of the few explicit links between the ES and ISS, the Copenhagen school has applied its securitization theory to show how the primary (e.g., sovereignty, market) and secondary (e.g., WTO, UN) institutions of international society can be referent objects for securitization in their own right (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998). Since primary institutions constitute both the players and the game, threats to those institutions are existential to both the units and the social order, adding a social perspective on *raison d'état*, and bringing in *raison de système*. For example, violence-wielding nonstate actors such as al-Qaeda threaten the institutions of sovereignty/non-intervention and territoriality, threatening the legitimacy not just of states but also of international society. The global market easily becomes a referent object when there are threats to the rules on trade and finance on which its operation rests, or when the periodic crises of capitalism require extreme measures, as after 2008 (Buzan, Wæver and de Wilde, 1998: 95-117). The logic by which the institutions of international society can become referent objects of security works both at the global level, and for subglobal/regional international societies.

More broadly, there is a consistent international security theme in the longstanding ES concern that international society can be threatened by a reduction in its cultural coherence. As a consequence of the expansion of European international society to global scale, it necessarily moved beyond its Western, Christian, foundational cultural base and partly over-ran and partly integrated with, several non-European cultures. Much classical ES literature assumes that interstate society necessarily rests on a substrate of shared culture, from which it draws the shared values that define and enable its institutions. The concern in the classical ES literature was that a multicultural foundation would necessarily diminish the pool of shared values available to international society, and thus expansion would result in the dilution of those values and a weakening or destabilizing of international society as a whole (Bull and Watson, 1984; Buzan, 2014, ch. 5). Contemporary tensions over human rights, democracy and the market exemplify the force of this concern, although the counterpoint is the depth with which other institutions, notably sovereignty, nationalism, and territoriality, have become accepted and internalised across cultures.

Both the ES and constructivism provide a social dimension to security analysis to complement, or in more militant versions replace, the materialist framing that dominates neorealist and neoliberal framings for ISS. The ES approach has two advantages. First, it is, as I will show in the next section, much more detailed and fine-grained in its conceptualisation of social structure; second, it sets this social structural understanding into a historical context and provides benchmarks against which the evolution of the social structure can be assessed. In other words, using the ES as a general framing for ISS inserts a strong element of *raison de système* to offset the dominance of *raison d'état* in much thinking about international security. ISS needs to incorporate a logic of *raison de système* into its scheme of things, both to open ground for systemic social structures to play as referent objects of security, and to provide an analytical framework in which the prevailing normative structure defines the legitimacy, or not, of specific securitizations.

English School Insights for International Security Studies

In addition to its general utility as a framing for ISS, the ES also offers four more particular insights that play advantageously into how ISS thinks about its subject matter. First, it provides a normative framing for understanding securitization. Second it puts core concepts into a socio-historical perspective that exposes them as variables rather than as constants. Third, it highlights the importance to security perceptions of thinking about

insider/outsider status. Fourth, it enriches the ability to think about regional differentiation as a factor in international security.

1. *Primary institutions as the normative framing for securitization*

In ES perspective, any given international society will comprise a variety of primary institutions, and both in themselves, and in combination, these set the normative framework that either facilitates or obstructs particular securitizations. This fine-grained view of international social structure provides a deep insight into the logic of securitization. For example, if dynasticism is the primary political institution, then genealogy and lines of succession become common referent objects for security in a way that they do not where popular sovereignty is the dominant political institution. Similarly, if human inequality is the dominant rule, then it is more difficult to securitize slavery or racism or imperialism than is the case where a rule of human rights is in place. If nationalism is a primary institution, then it is much easier to make the people defined as a nation into a referent object of security than if it is not. This quite straightforward logic gets more complicated when one looks at the interplay among the institutions that compose any given international society. Some institutions combine harmoniously. The classical Westphalian set of sovereignty, territoriality, international law, diplomacy, war balance of power and great power management, for example, all work together quite comfortably. But nationalism and the market have disruptive effects on this package, both changing what other institutions mean, and introducing contradictions into the normative structure of international society.

The ES *locus classicus* for this story is Mayall (1990; see also Watson, 1992: 228-51). Mayall charts in detail how nationalism changed the meaning and practices of war, territoriality and sovereignty, and indeed the meaning of the state itself (Mayall, 2000b). The transformative effect of nationalism on the state came through its key idea that the nation as a people should be the basis of the state. Nationalism delegitimized dynasticism as the dominant form of the state (Mayall, 1990: 35) and increased social cohesion. It reinforced *raison d'état* but also provided a new logic of *raison de système*. Eventually, it caused the breakup of empires and the demise of colonialism as an institution of international society.

Putting nationalism into the mix has a number of effects that change the landscape of securitization. Most obviously, nationalism changes sovereignty by shifting the foundations of political legitimacy from the dynastic claims of ruling aristocracies, to the popular sovereignty of the people constituted as a nation (Mayall, 1990: 26-8), moving 'nations' to centre stage as a referent

object for securitization. Nationalism also transforms the other foundation of the state, territoriality. When the absolutist state became the nation-state, territory became sacralised by its relationship to the people in a way that was not present in the politics of dynastic territoriality (Mayall, 2000a: 84; Holsti, 2004: 83-8). By tightening the link between states, populations and particular territories, nationalism generated new problems of irredentism and secessionism (Mayall, 1990: 57-63). The complex interplay among nationalism, sovereignty and territoriality can be observed in the history of many places from South Sudan, Eritrea and Kosovo, to Germany, Korea and China. The huge impact of nationalism in sacralising territory is shown by the seizure of Alsace-Lorraine by Germany from France in their 1870 war, which poisoned relations between the two and played its part in the making of the First and Second World Wars. The states of East Asia are replaying this game of sacralised territory in their ongoing disputes over a variety of small rocks, reefs and islands in the East and South China Seas. The huge passions driving securitizations in these two cases only make sense because of their particular legitimation by nationalism. By changing territoriality in this way, nationalism also provided new reasons for war. In its extreme social Darwinist form nationalism gave a justification for the expropriation of the weak by the strong. More generally it set up a tension between the *status quo* of fewer than two hundred territorial states, and the potential existence of several thousand cultural nations demanding their own state (Mayall, 1990: 63-9).

Similarly, once the market became established as an institution of international society, it had substantial knock-on effects on other institutions, most obviously for ISS, war and territoriality. The rise of the market has in one sense been a struggle about territoriality. Economic nationalists have wanted to impose territoriality onto the economic sector, while economic liberals have wanted to open borders to flows of goods, ideas, capital, and up to a point labour (i.e. people). The rise of the global market has in many ways, and in most places, shot territorial borders full of what look like large and permanent holes. It has radically changed the practice of territoriality, or from another perspective, compromised its core principle in relation to the economic sector. At the same time, the rise of the market has put pressure on the practice of war, making it both less necessary (because resources and customers are available without territorial control), and more costly (because the *raison de système* of economic interdependence means that all pay a high price if the global market is disrupted). To get an idea of the effect of this for international security, contrast the behaviour of states such as Germany and Japan, or indeed Britain and the US, before and after 1945.

Another such tension among primary institutions that features in the ES literature is between human rights and sovereignty/non-intervention,⁶ which is close to the ISS literature on human security. Both literatures are fully aware that human rights is an emergent and still contested value. Until 1945, the norm of human inequality and the practice of racism prevailed almost everywhere. Human inequality and racism peaked under fascism during the Second World War and collapsed afterwards, along with imperialism/colonialism, not least because of the atrocities of that war. They were replaced by a norm of human equality embedded in the charter of the United Nations and most visibly expressed in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Human rights are nevertheless more strongly held in some parts of international society, mainly the West, than in others, and elements of them are strongly opposed by states that fear erosion of their right to non-intervention, most prominently Russia and China. This unequal distribution plays profoundly into where and why securitization logics can or cannot work. The problem here is that if human rights are universal and rooted in the individual, this implies a fundamental challenge to sovereignty (the absolute right of the state to exercise authority within its territory). That tension has grave implications for the legitimacy of humanitarian interventions, and also ties into the human security agenda of how the rights and responsibilities of individuals can be better harmonised with those of states (Dunne and Wheeler, 2004). Williams (2004) rightly makes the case for linking these more radical concerns with human rights in the English School to the emancipatory themes of Critical Security Studies in order to create a more revolutionist English School approach to security.

The implication of this discussion for ISS is that knowledge of the social structure needs to be an essential part of security analysis. The institutions of international society largely shape the reasons that determine what people will fight and die for, and why states will go to war. Knowledge of the social structure gives some understanding of what kinds of securitization will be easy or difficult, and some insight into complex cases where the social structure supports conflicting values at the same time. This insight into *raison de*

⁶ The ES discussion of human rights is partly a general one about the tensions between human rights and sovereignty in relation to international order (Bull, 1977, 1984a&b; Vincent, 1986; Hurrell, 2007: 143–64), and partly a more particular one about the emergence (or not) of human rights as a norm or institution of international society. There is a lot of discussion of (non)intervention generally (Wight, 1966a: 111-20; Vincent, 1974; Little, 1975; Bull, 1984a; Roberts, 1993, 1996, 1999, 2006; Vincent and Wilson, 1993; Makinda, 1997, 1998; Mayall, 1998; Bain, 2001; Cronin, 2002; Bellamy and McDonald, 2004; Buzan, 2004), and humanitarian intervention in particular (Wheeler, 1992, 2000; Knudsen, 1996, 2009; Wheeler and Morris, 1996; Williams, 1999; Brown, 2002; Bellamy, 2003; Wu, 2006). For all the contestation about it, it is clear that human rights has acquired legitimacy as a basis for public policy and appeal for international action (Welsh, 2011; Wheeler, 2000: 40-48, 283-8; Mayall, 2000b: 64; Donnelly, 1998:20–3).

système from the ES is of particular relevance to the Copenhagen School's securitization approach, but also complements constructivist and poststructuralist concerns about identity, discursive construction and social structure. No other approach offers anything like the detailed framing for international social structure provided by primary institutions.

Historical variability of key ISS concepts

As already hinted at in the discussion above of primary institutions as the normative framing for securitization, such institutions arise, evolve, and sometimes die away (Holsti, 2004). Nationalism and the market were born during the late 18th century and matured during the 19th and 20th. Colonialism and human inequality (racism), having shaped international security practices and purposes for centuries, became obsolete after the Second World War. Human rights and environmental stewardship have been emerging as possible new institutions of international society during the past several decades. This slow fluidity of the international social structure is a permanent process. Primary institutions are durable but not fixed, and this means that some practices often seen in the ISS literature as constants are in fact variables. ISS tends to take institutions such as nationalism, territoriality and war as givens in the background of strategic analysis. But as the ES story shows, they are not constants. Some are relatively recent constructions, successfully exported from Europe to the rest of the world. In principle, both nationalism and territoriality could weaken and play less of a role, and the logic of globalization provides a mechanism by which such a new twist in the story might develop. Perhaps of more immediate concern is that significant variations in practice might be developing, with the nationalism/territoriality link getting weaker in the Western core while, as developments in Asia show, remaining strong elsewhere. Even without becoming obsolete, how primary institutions vary has substantial effects on the environment of international security. This can be illustrated by looking through ES lenses at two key ISS concepts: war and the balance of power.

War

In ES perspective, war is not a constant feature of anarchic international systems, but a negotiated practice within international societies that varies markedly over time.⁷ As a primary institution, war can vary from a fairly open

⁷ Generally, Bull, 1977; Holsti, 1991, 1996, 2004; Best 1994; Song, 2005; Jones, 2006; Pejcinovic, 2013, and there is a large body of work specifically on the laws of war by Adam Roberts (2000, 2004, 2006, 2007). Morris (2005) and Nardin (2004) address the related but

practice (any reason will do, low restraints on methods) to a highly constrained one (narrow legitimacy and many restraints on methods). Holsti (2004: 277-83) outlines the institutionalization of war during the 18th century, making it more professional, putting limits on conduct, legalising its status, and confining it to states as legitimate practitioners. Pejcinovic (2013) tracks the history of war as an institution of European/Western international society, looking particularly at the changing rationales for war, and the difference between the use of war amongst insiders, and between insiders and outsiders. As Bull (1977: 186-9) argues, war is by definition about narrowing the right to use force by giving the state monopoly powers over it. At the level of *raison de système*, this narrowing is extended by narrowing the legitimate reasons for, and methods of fighting, war.

The legitimate scope for war was wide up to the end of the 19th century, although the rise of nationalism made the claiming of legitimate sovereignty over territories seized by force more difficult than in earlier times, and Holsti (2004: 131-4) claims that removal of conquest as a legitimate ground for claiming sovereignty can be observed from 1815 onwards. The legitimacy of war narrowed after the First and Second World Wars and up to 2001, though one temporary exception to this trend was when decolonization after 1945 legitimised wars for independence against colonial powers (Pejcinovic, 2013: ch. 6). The rise of the market downgraded or removed economic motives for war by delinking wealth and the possession of territory (Bull, 1977: 195), but this effect did not really kick in until after the Second World War, and even more so after the end of the Cold War. The incentives to resort to war, especially amongst the great powers, were being reduced by the impact of technology in raising its costs and scale of destruction (Bull, 1977: 189-99), though as Pejcinovic (2013) argues, the use of the threat of war was still very much in play in Cold War policies of nuclear deterrence. With the terrorist attacks of 9/11, this steady squeeze on the legitimacy of war came to an end. The US reacted to this attack by declaring open season on terrorists and their supporters, and claiming a much wider right to resort to war in its self-defence against the new type of threat (Holsti, 2004: 146-50; Jones, 2006; Ralph, 2010). As Mayall (2000a: 95-6, 102-4, 2000b: 70; see also Hurrell, 2007a: 63-5) notes, the rise of human rights as an institution also extends the right of war beyond self-defence. The picture is now very mixed (Holsti, 2004: 283-99; see also Hurrell, 2007a: 165-93). War is pretty much obsolete within the West, and more arguably amongst the great powers as a whole, though Pejcinovic (2013) argues that it is still an important institution of international society. By contrast, in many other parts of the world it is suffering de-institutionalisation, whereby

more general question of how the structure of international society defines the legitimacy (or not) of the use of force.

any sense of professionalism, restraint on violence, or limits to use have eroded away.

In ES perspective, therefore, the legitimacy and purpose of war have changed a lot. The role of war in international security cannot be understood without knowing how it stands as an institution of international society. Restrictions on war are not constant, but wax and wane, and can be tracked historically. Topics such as the taboo against the use of nuclear weapons, which do register in the ISS debates, could usefully be framed within this wider and more fluid understanding of war as a primary institution.

Balance of Power

In ES perspective, the balance of power is again not a mechanical derivative of anarchy, but a social institution, where the great powers agree to a principle of balance as a way of maintaining international order (Butterfield, 1966; Wight, 1966b; Bull, 1977; Hobson and Seabrooke, 2001; Kingsbury, 2002; Little, 2006, 2007). Balancing depends on the idea from Vattel that no one power should be in a position to lay down the law to the others (Bull, 1977: 101). Balancing is essentially motivated by an agreement on anti-hegemonism: the desire to stop any one power from dominating the international system. The institution of balancing emerged in Europe after 1713 and was consolidated after 1815. The Concert of Europe during the 19th century provides the model for balance of power as a conscious institution of international society. The great power Concert broke down in the run-up to the First World War, had a flawed and feeble revival during the 1920s under the League of Nations (with the US refusing to join in), and broke down again catastrophically during the 1930s. Hope for reconstruction of a managed balance after the Second World War was quickly dashed by the onset of the Cold War. The appearance of nuclear weapons after 1945 made a substantial difference to the operation of the balance of power by adding deterrence logic into the equation (Bull, 1977: 117-26). Big questions about the standing of balancing arose with the ending of the Cold War in 1989. The implosion of the Soviet Union abruptly ended the adversarial balancing game between US and the Soviet Union and left the US as the sole superpower. The frenzy of balancing that neorealists assumed should be triggered by this structure did not take place. For a mix of reasons, after 1989, balancing and anti-hegemonism weakened markedly. As the global distribution of power diffuses away from the West (Buzan, 2011), the balance of power is likely to return to the agenda of ISS as a key question. The rise of China, India and other powers and the relative decline of the US/West will almost certainly trigger reconstructions and renegotiations of the balance of power in the coming decades. The possible outcomes of this remain quite open, ranging from another round of 'great irresponsibles' (Bull, 1980), to a 'concert of capitalist powers' (Buzan and Lawson, 2014).

Looking at these two institutions through an ES lens makes clear that some of the most central concepts in ISS vary very significantly in their strength and meaning, and that this variability needs to be factored into ISS analyses of both securitization and the security dynamics of the international system.

Defining inside/outside status

An ES framing for ISS opens up an important variation on the security implications of being inside or outside of international society. Within IR, inside/outside is usually concerned with contrasting what goes on inside states (order, progress) and what goes on outside or between them (disorder, and a repetitive logic of anarchy) (Wight, 1966c; Walker, 1993). Adding international society subverts this binary by seeing the 'outside' as also socially structured. In principle international society could be uniform and global in scale, in which case all would be inside it, and the impact of international society on security would be the same for all as discussed above in terms of whatever package of primary institutions prevailed. In practice, however, international society is internally differentiated in ways that generates insiders and outsiders to the social structure (Buzan, 1996, 2010b). The most obvious example of how being 'outside' affects security is the Western-colonial international society that peaked during the 19th century (Buzan and Lawson, 2015). Here the Western core promoted its own 'standard of civilization' and acted as gatekeeper on entry to international society (Gong, 1984). Those excluded on grounds of being 'barbarian' or 'savage' could be colonised, expropriated or even exterminated (Phillips, 2012). Being an outsider to international society can have serious security consequences.

One of the big stories of the ES, that of the expansion of an initially European international society to global scale, is thus about insiders and outsiders, and much of it is about the coercive imposition of European values and institutions onto outsiders by insiders (Bull and Watson, 1984; Gong, 1984; Zhang, 1991; Keene, 2002; Keal, 2003; Suzuki, 2005, 2009). There are many studies in this literature of the encounters between, on the one hand, well-armed Europeans (and later Americans and Japanese) who did not hesitate to use force to impose their values, and on the other hand, a variety of non-Western cultures (mainly Japan, China, the Ottoman Empire, and Thailand) that were forced to come to terms with the new Western order. These encounters, with their stories of unequal treaties and threats of occupation, give a stark insight into the security problems of being an outsider to international society. As noted above, there were marked differences between the use of war amongst insiders, and between insiders and outsiders

(Pejcinovic, 2013). Neumann (2011) makes the interesting argument that all encounters involved polities coming from hegemonic/suzerain systems having to come to terms with the anarchic qualities of European/Western international society, and so carrying a significant residual of outsidership even when nominally inside. This has many ongoing echoes today that play into security politics (Zarakol, 2011), and makes it more difficult for these states to accept *raison de système*. The obvious resonance of this perspective is with postcolonial approaches to ISS.

The (non)intervention literature is relevant here inasmuch as the politics of intervention is strongly mediated by whether it is understood to be an affair amongst insiders (and therefore subject to the relevant primary institutions) or one between insiders and outsiders (and therefore subject only to whatever rules are thought to be universal, or to whatever self-limiting norms the 'civilized' apply to themselves). This dynamic is particularly noticeable in relation to institutions that are still more Western than global, most notably human rights and democracy. The West still pressures others to accept these on the grounds that they are universal rights, but there remains much resistance from many quarters to that interpretation. There is a quite widespread view within the English School that human rights has in some ways continued the inside/outside tradition of European international society, becoming the new 'standard of civilization' wielded by the West against the rest (Gong, 1984: 90–3; Donnelly, 1998; Jackson, 2000: 287–93; Keene, 2002: 122–3, 147–8; Gong, 2002; Clark, 2007:183). Human rights criteria provide an opportunity to circumvent the decolonization deal of sovereign equality for all by reviving the 'standard of civilization', declaring some states, or at least their governments, not fit for membership. All of this suggests that although the idea of outsidership might appear to have lost much of its interest as international society became global, in fact it is still very much alive, and a force behind some contemporary dynamics of securitization. International society still has some imperial qualities, and understanding these opens the way to problematizing the status quo, West-centric perspective that too often marks security analysis. Securitizations around human rights, the market and democracy are not difficult to find in contemporary international society.

Differentiating the security dynamics of regions both from each other and from the Western-global international society

The idea that international society is internally differentiated works not only in an inside/outside perspective but also in a regional one. Here the ES perspective runs close to the notion of multiple possible logics of anarchy applying at the sub-global and regional levels, and reflected in ISS work on

security regimes (Jervis, 1985), security communities (Adler and Barnett, 1998), the Copenhagen School's regional security complexes (Buzan, 2007[1991]; Wæver, 1996; Buzan *et al.*, 1998; Buzan and Wæver, 2003), and regional orders (Lake and Morgan, 1997; Ayooob, 1999). This opens up for synergies between the study of regional international societies and regional security. Such mutual support might be useful, because within both ISS and the ES, study of the regional level has had an uphill struggle against predominantly global framings for international society and international security. Regional international societies will have different structures of primary institutions both from each other and from Western-global level international society, and these differences will impact on the dynamics of security in all of the ways described above. Until recently, the English School showed little interest in the idea of regional international societies, but over recent years this neglect is being corrected (Buzan, 2004: 205–27; Hurrell, 2007a: 239–61, 2007b; Stivachtis, 2010). Jackson (2000: 128) argues that the English School should take a more regionally differentiated view of contemporary international society, seeing it as 'of mixed character and uneven depth from one global region to the next'. Some attention has been paid to the EU (Diez and Whitman, 2002: 45; Riemer and Stivachtis, 2002: 21–2); East Asia (Zhang, 2001; Wang, 2007; Zhang, 2009; Suzuki, 2009; Buzan and Zhang, 2014); the Middle East (Buzan and Gonzalez-Pelaez, 2009); and Latin America (Jones, 2007; Merke, 2011). What these studies reveal, is that from a security perspective what matters is how institutions such as war and sovereignty/non-intervention differ both among regions and between individual regions and the Western-global international society. The idea of regional international societies also plays into the discussion of intervention above, because the differences represented by regional international society could well define the terms of insider/outsider that would make intervention legitimate or not.

Conclusions

As should by now be apparent, an approach via the ES to several key ISS concepts provides distinctive and important perspectives that are either not found or not featured in the mainstream ISS discussions. Both in terms general framing and specific topics addressed, there are many powerful synergies between the ES and ISS. One big general contribution available to ISS from the ES is the sense that the *raison de système* of the social structure provides a crucial context for security analysis. This is also argued by constructivists and poststructuralists, but a second big contribution from the ES is the lens of primary institutions, which offers a more fine-grained way of analysing international social structure as it affects international security. This

affects many things, ranging from the facilitating conditions for securitization, through the legitimacy of intervention, to the casting as variables of security concepts that ISS tends to take as constants. The ES would also benefit in several ways from a more systematic engagement with ISS. It would be forced to make the coercive aspect of international society more prominent in its analyses. It would perhaps facilitate consideration within the ES about whether certain kinds of very durable war should be considered in themselves to be primary institutions. For example, both the Cold War, on the global level, and the Arab-Israel war, in the context of Middle Eastern regional international society, fit quite closely with definitions of primary institutions that emphasise durable and evolved deep practices. The paucity of contact between the ES and ISS has obscured the quite rich possibilities for synergies. These two fields of study have much to offer each other, and a few individuals prepared to build bridges from both sides could make a lot of difference.

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