Introduction

The present volume, written in close collaboration by Hidemi Suganami and Andrew Linklater, is the first book-length attempt to detail the essential features of the so-called English School of International Relations and to demonstrate how some of its key texts and ideas can provide a basis for a historically informed and normatively progressivist understanding of contemporary international relations.

Our initial idea to produce a collaborative work on the theme of the English School emerged while we taught together in the Department of International Relations at Keele University. The subject was an obvious choice for our collaboration. Since his arrival in the UK in 1970 as a graduate student, Suganami has been closely acquainted with several scholars, and their works, whose names it has become customary to relate to the label, 'the English School'. Although his own interests in the study of international relations go beyond the traditional research parameters of English School writers (see, e.g., Suganami, 1996), some of their early publications (e.g., Manning, 1975) had a formative influence on his understanding of the institutional structure of contemporary international society (see Suganami, 1982, 1983, 1989, 2001a). Over the same period, Linklater had dedicated much of his scholarly work to developing a cosmopolitan perspective, arguing for the necessity and possibility of reducing the areas in which the institutional distinction between citizens and outsiders is treated as morally relevant in the practice of world politics (see, in particular, Linklater 1982, 1990, 1998). In this process, he had come to see in some key works of the English School – especially historical ones emanating from the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics – a rich source of insight and inspiration.

The present volume is also a response to an accelerating growth of interest, especially marked in the past few years, in the English School, its works, future potential and role in the disciplinary history of International Relations. Indeed, contemporary analysts frequently rely on the School's principal themes to understand continuity and change in the structure of international politics (see, for instance, Fawn and Larkins, 1996a; Roberson, 1998). The lasting significance of its inquiry into the relationship between international order and the aspiration for human justice is evident in many analyses of the changing relationship between state sovereignty, the global human rights culture and the norm of humanitarian intervention which emerged in the context of the post-Cold War era (Roberts, 1993; Wheeler and Dunne, 1998; Mayall, 2000c; Wheeler, 2000). The English School's pathbreaking analysis of the expansion of international society has been extended in studies of the failed state in the world's most violent regions (Jackson, 1990, 2000). A related concern with the revolt against the West, and with the need for understanding between different and often clashing cultural world-views in a uniquely multicultural international society, has lost none of its importance following the events of 11 September (Shapcott, 2000; Linklater, 2002a). Moreover, students of the history of the discipline continue to discuss and debate the significance of the English School in the study of international relations (Dunne, 1998; Suganami, 2001a; Bellamy, 2005).

Past areas of neglect on the part of the English School, such as European integration, international political economy and global environmental politics, are now being brought onto the agenda of research by scholars who self-consciously follow in the footsteps of earlier English School thinkers (see Buzan, 2001). As the agenda of the School has broadened, so has its scholarly worth come to be recognized by a wide range of writers (Der Derian, 1987; Linklater, 1998; Krasner, 1999). Inquiries into the relationship between the English School and constructivism have asked whether the former to some extent pre-empted the latter in recognizing the importance of norms in international relations and whether it might learn from the latter's methodological sophistication. These considerations have had a central place in recent international relations theory (Dunne, 1995b; Reus-Smit, 1999, 2002; Suganami, 2001d).

Investigations of this kind are closely connected with the growing interest in forging connections between historical sociology and International Relations. The historical-sociological turn in the discipline has

many different influences, among the most important being Watson's panoramic analysis of the different global configurations of power in world history and Wight's grand vision of a comparative sociology of states-systems (Wight, 1977; Watson, 1992; see also Buzan and Little, 2000; Hobden and Hobson, 2002; Linklater, 2002a). In summary, over the last five to ten years, the English School has become more influential in global debates and discussions about the movement of world politics, about the prospects for, and constraints on, the development of fairer global arrangements, and about the methodologies which are best suited to improve understanding on those fronts.

It was against this background of the renaissance of interest in the English School that our idea of producing a jointly authored volume was implemented. The division of labour between us reflected our respective interests and strengths. Suganami wrote the first three chapters of this volume, aimed, respectively, to show: (1) who can plausibly be considered as the central figures of the English School; (2) what types of questions they have investigated and how their suggested answers constitute a closely interwoven set of knowledge-claims; and (3) on the basis of what sorts of assumptions about the nature of International Relations (IR) as an intellectual pursuit they have conducted their inquiries. These reflect Suganami's special interest in meta-disciplinary engagement with substantive knowledge-claims advanced by leading IR scholars.

Linklater wrote the next four chapters. These cumulatively demonstrate how a critical and constructive reading of some selected English School texts yields a rich perspective on world politics. This perspective (1) points to progressive potentials embedded in anarchical states-systems; (2) accommodates the Kantian tradition of international relations theory as a foundation of its substantive contentions; (3) produces a historical-sociological research project on past states-systems, with special reference to how different kinds of harm are brought under normative constraint; and (4) is capable of formulating some basic normative guidelines regarding the conduct of foreign policy in a number of contexts prevailing in the contemporary world. These reflect Linklater's long-standing interest in normative theorizing about international relations which articulates the progressive direction the contemporary society of states is capable of taking towards an ethically more satisfactory social universe.

Both of us revised our respective chapters a number of times, and on every occasion we each took into account the other's criticisms

and responses until we were both satisfied that they have been dealt with appropriately given what each of us sets out to achieve. Primary responsibility for the claims made in Chapters 1–3 rests with Suganami and that for those in Chapters 4–7 with Linklater. We are jointly responsible for the introduction and conclusion.

In the process of mutual scrutiny, we became aware that our strategies of reading texts are somewhat different. Suganami has tended to focus on extracting a rationally defensible core from a given text, cutting out ambiguities, inconsistencies and not fully developed points. By contrast, Linklater has been more tolerant of ambiguities, inconsistencies and underdeveloped points in a given text, and has been concerned with developing the English School in a more critical and normative direction. It is our hope, however, that our division of labour and mutual ciriticisms have produced a balanced and fruitful interpretation of the texts that we discuss in the main body of this volume. The reader may notice that we are somewhat different in our writing styles too. But it was not our aim to attempt to produce a stylistically more unified volume. Naturally, we paid close attention to the clarity and intelligibility of our expositions, and we hope we are united in our styles in those respects. In the remaining part of this introduction, the overall argument of the book is outlined to indicate where we begin, how we end and through what route.

It was mentioned above that Linklater's interest in the English School is focused on the number of works emanating from the British Committee on the Theory of International Politics, especially those of Martin Wight, Adam Watson and Hedley Bull. He highlights these in his chapters as the main source of inspiration and insight. The British Committee has been seen as the institutional home of the English School by some leading commentators on its life and works (see Dunne, 1998), and has effectively been treated as its other name (Little, 1995; Watson, 2001). The association of the two bodies is nowhere more apparent than in Barry Buzan's call in 1999 to 'reconvene the English School' (Buzan, 2001) – to enhance intellectual collaboration among like-minded International Relations (IR) specialists on the model of the British Committee with a view to making scholarly contributions further along the lines set out by some of the School's classical texts. But this view of the English School's identity is at odds with an earlier conception of it, according to which the School had evolved from 'that intimate intellectual grouping, based at the LSE in the 1950s and 60s, which inaugurated and first developed the [international society]

approach' (Wilson, 1989: 55) to the study and teaching of international relations under the intellectual leadership of C. A. W. Manning.

A closer examination of a series of key pronouncements concerning the English School in the IR literature reveals that there are in fact considerable discrepancies in the ways its identity has been construed. This can cause a problem for a volume such as the present one whose subject-matter is nothing other than the English School, its achievements and potentials. Chapter 1 therefore attempts to resolve this problem by a detailed critical examination of the history of *the idea* of 'the English School'. The upshot of the critical exposition is that 'the English School' is itself a historically constructed entity, through the process of historical recounting, in which a number of partly overlapping, and more or less equally plausible, stories are told about its origins, development and identity. Neither the more recent 'British Committee view' of the English School, led by Dunne (1991), nor the older 'LSE view' of it, initiated by Roy Jones (1981), can be said to monopolize full truths about the School's identity. The realization that 'the English School' is a historically constructed idea enables us to adopt a broad and flexible picture of its identity, according to which C. A. W. Manning, Martin Wight, Hedley Bull, Alan James, John Vincent, Adam Watson and a few others, including more recent contributors, such as Andrew Hurrell, Nicholas Wheeler, Tim Dunne and Robert Jackson, are all seen to play a key role in its origins and continuing evolution.

Chapter 2 outlines the arguments of the English School. This gives further credence to the claim that the above-mentioned authors form a school, as the questions they pose and the answers they deliver are seen to form a closely interwoven tapestry of knowledge-claims about international relations with regard to a number of interrelated issues. These are divided into structural, functional and historical dimensions, and several key English School contributors' arguments are expounded in the light of this tripartite division.

The purpose of this chapter is to give an accurate account of the key English School authors' substantive contentions about international relations in some detail, paying attention to interconnections between them put forward over a diverse range of issues. One important section of this chapter discusses the contrast between 'pluralism' and 'solidarism'. This distinction was introduced by Hedley Bull in one of his earliest works (1966b) against the background of the failure of the United Nations' collective security mechanism during the Cold War, but has come to be used in a rather different way in connection with

the evolving practice of humanitarian intervention in the post-Cold War period (see Wheeler 2000). Pluralism and solidarism, which at the beginning referred mainly to two contrasting empirical interpretations about whether there was sufficient solidarity or potential solidarity to make law-enforcement workable in the existing international society, have now come by and large to be taken to mean two contrasting normative positions, one aiming at a minimalist goal of the orderly coexistence of states, and the other going beyond this to include a more demanding goal of the international protection of human rights standards globally. How this shift of meaning was possible, given some ambiguity in Bull's initial writing (1966b), and how the empirical and the normative are related in formulating one's position along the pluralist-solidarist axis are explained in the chapter. This discussion is important in that the distinction between pluralism and solidarism in the more recent sense plays a key role in the later chapters of this volume.

Having revealed close similarities and intricate interconnections in the English School authors' substantive arguments about their subject-matter, Suganami moves, in Chapter 3, to examine the methodological and epistemological parameters within which their substantive works on international relations have been produced. The purpose of this chapter is partly to see whether, at this deeper level too, there may be some unity in the School's thinking, and partly also to explain what kind of intellectual enterprise theirs is when they produce knowledge-claims about international relations. There is a need to engage in this type of examination because English School authors have not themselves been very explicit about the epistemological nature of their contentions, and the more methodologically self-conscious parts of the IR community have therefore found English School works difficult to incorporate into their research. As one North American critic has put it: 'for many American scholars, simply figuring out what its methods *are* is a challenge' (Finnemore, 2001: 509; emphasis Finnemore's).

The discussion in this chapter is conducted in response to this remark in the light of the three key questions. (1) English School writers are united in their appreciation of the relevance of historical knowledge to the study of international relations, but what precisely is it that they think the former can do for the latter? The discussion reveals considerable ambiguity and uncertainty on the part of the English School about the nature of historical knowledge and its relevance to IR. (2) English School writers are united in their scepticism towards a scientific study of international relations, but what do they

offer in its place and what do they fail to give sufficient attention to in their studies? The discussion points to the English School writers' emphasis on explaining what goes on internationally by penetrating the minds, and uncovering the assumptions and motives, of the key actors, and also to their almost total neglect of causal mechanisms for political change. (3) English School writers have exhibited notable ambivalence towards normative or ethical questions, but what explains this, how have they circumvented such questions, and how satisfactory is this situation? The discussion points to the absence of any serious meta-ethical reflections within the English School; and its writers' tendency to insist either that they are only making a factual observation about the presence of certain values within a society, or that their evaluation of the desirability of particular international norms pertains only to their instrumental appropriateness, and not to the ultimate validity of the ends thereby sought. Despite such weaknesses, the English School's approach to the study of international relations is shown to have considerable merits: it does not fail to draw attention to the institutional dimension of modern world politics organized as a society of states; it is historically informed; and it aims to produce substantive understanding of international relations without deviating too far into meta-theoretical disputations. Further, despite their general emphasis on the goal of order in world politics, they, or Bull in particular, do not lose sight of the fact that order is not the only value pursued by humankind.

What emerges from these three chapters is a clear picture of the English School as a broad church. Its works are closely interconnected, yet they cover a wide range of subjects. There are certain ambiguities and uncertainties in their methodological and epistemological assumptions, yet even at this level there are common parameters and tendencies in their thoughts and orientations. Future works that self-consciously take the English School's achievements as their point of departure may cover diverse issues. Among them are: a more detailed empirical study of the historical evolution of social arrangements in inter-societal relationships; a normative theory of international relations which is more reflective of its meta-ethical foundations; an analysis of world historical narratives from the viewpoint of their relations to different traditions of thought about the nature of international politics. The next four chapters of this volume, written by Linklater, go on to underline, and give some substance to, these suggestions.

The starting point of Linklater's engagement with the English School writings is his judgement that the most fundamental question in IR is: 'How far can world politics be changed for the better?' He considers that English School authors have provided a judicious perspective on this question – that there can be and has been more progress than the realists think possible, but nothing so far-reaching as the radical revolutionists would like.

In Linklater's four chapters, the reader will find that his idea of progressive transformation is expressed in the light of a number of key concepts: 'system, society and community', 'pluralist society' and 'solidarist society', 'international harm conventions and cosmopolitan harm conventions', and 'a good international citizen' in different kinds of social contexts. The underlying idea is that relations between political communities can progress from one in which they treat one another as simply a brute fact to take into account in deciding how to act ('a system') towards a more fully societal one in which they share interest in governance through common institutions ('a society'). Societal relations can in turn develop from a minimalist ('pluralist') one, in which the common goal is restricted to the maintenance of the orderly coexistence of separate political communities, towards a more advanced ('solidarist') one, in which the goal increasingly incorporates the protection of human rights across separate communities. When the evolution progresses to an exceptionally high point where the society can no longer appropriately be said to consist of separate political communities which are determined to maintain their sovereignty or independence, the label 'community' comes to be used. A pluralist society of states is concerned with reducing inter-state harm and incorporates 'international harm conventions' within its institutional framework, whereas a solidarist society of states incorporates 'cosmopolitan harm conventions', designed to reduce harm done to individual citizens located in separate communities. 'International good citizens' are states, or governments acting for the states, who act to protect the respective social goals of the pluralist, solidarist and other interrelations.

English School writers have not analysed historical states-systems with a view to producing a general theory of the evolution of international society along such a path. However, some of them (e.g., Watson, 1992) have drawn attention to the historical tendencies for a crude system of inter-state interaction to develop into a more fully developed societal one, and also to the fact that the modern

states-system, in particular, has come to embrace transcultural values (e.g., Bull and Watson, 1984). At the same time, English School writers do not lose sight of the danger of the destruction of international society and the constant need to protect and strengthen the element of international society in world politics.

Against this background, Chapter 4 extrapolates from a number of English School sources an explanation – which is in principle applicable transhistorically – of how states under anarchy may evolve their relations from a mere system, via the most basic post-systemic form, towards an increasingly more societal, and morally less deficient, kind, and how such a process may come to embrace the entire world. In the Cold War period, English School writings have been characterized by their stress on prudence, caution and the pursuit of pluralist values. There are followers of the English School tradition who are still inclined to draw attention to the dangers of trying to go much beyond an orderly coexistence of states towards a more solidarist goal (e.g., Jackson, 2000). But, in Linklater's view, the important function of the English School as a whole has been to alert us to the progressive potentials embedded in anarchical states-systems and possibilities for further progress immanent in the contemporary society of states.

The purpose of the four chapters by Linklater, therefore, is to explore how English School writings may be read, reread and exploited to sketch out a progressive perspective on international relations which draws on the resources of critical international theory. Such a stance, however idealistic in its intent and orientation, is not a utopian project. To the extent that it offers normative guidelines on how states ought to behave in various contexts to sustain and enhance the moral quality of life internationally, it is meliorist, gradualist and builds on what can plausibly be interpreted to be already present as trends and potentialities within the existing reality of international politics. The older generation of English School writers were somewhat hesitant to offer such normative guidelines very explicitly, adamant that, as an academic observer, they should focus on representing the world as it actually is in a detached manner. But, it is submitted, there is no way to represent the world without necessarily offering an interpretation of it and there is no way to do so without, however marginally, affecting, or contributing to, the way the world goes on. This is especially so where the interpretation proffered relates to the possibilities and limits of change.

The earlier English School inclination to focus on the limits of progress went side by side with their disdainful view of radical

revolutionism, which they tended to depict as verging on fanaticism, totally lacking in prudence. One unfortunate victim – unfortunate not only for the victim, but also for the development of the English School as a serious intellectual movement imbued with a deep understanding of the traditions of international thought – is Immanuel Kant. Contrary to the well-publicized English School view, Kant's international theory, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, is best described as solidarism – within the rationalist tradition which is characterized as a *via media* between realism and revolutionism by Wight (1991). And when this point is appreciated, and Kant restored to his rightful place, it becomes easier to begin to appreciate the potential of English School writings as a resource for developing a more explicitly normative and progressivist perspective on world politics. Chapter 5 demonstrates this by pointing, among other things, to an important parallelism between, on the one hand, Kant's view of the possibility of progress in reaching agreements about duties not to injure others in domestic, international and transnational spheres of human relations, and, on the other, Bull's claim that *international* order is to be judged in the end by the extent to which it contributes to *world* order.

Progressivism, underlying the argument of the four chapters by Linklater, however, should not be taken to imply belief in the inevitability of progress. What is sought and offered is an interpretation of anarchical states-systems as having a potential to progress beyond mere systemic relations, an assessment of the modern states-system as perhaps uniquely capable of progressing far, and a judgement about the current phase of world politics as embracing discernible trends and possibilities for further progress towards solidarist goals. A characteristically English School way – because of the British Committee's pioneering interest in a comparative study of states-systems – to pursue this line of inquiry is to engage in a historical sociology of states-systems with special reference to the development of international and cosmopolitan harm conventions. An outline of such a project is given in some detail in Chapter 6. It argues that the fatalistic sociology which we find in Wight's writings does not exhaust the English School's resources, and that a sociology of states-systems which points to progressive potentials is already present in Wight's own essays.

In outlining the latter type of project, Linklater distinguishes between different forms of harm in world politics, and identifies some ways of answering the question of whether the modern states-system