

Shifting Gears: From Global to Regional

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YANNIS STIVACHTIS, FEB 6 2016

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The English School (ES) of International Relations has been known for its globalist perspective as the scholars associated with it have long asserted that international society at the global level is the framework within which to discuss international order and reach conclusions as to how to ensure its durability.[i] This research agenda has been reinforced by the post-Cold War international relations focus on globalisation. The globalising world, it has been maintained, is one best approached through the universal lens of interstate society.

ES' preoccupation with global international society should be understood in two ways:[ii] first, ES scholars have been concerned with the expansion of the historical European international society and its gradual transformation to the contemporary global international society:[iii] and second, they have sought to examine how order and justice are maintained within the global international society.[iv] The fixation of the classical ES with global international society and its disregard for societal developments at the regional level is reflected in Hedley Bull's view that 'purely regional' integration as largely irrelevant, indeed, inimical to 'global social integration'.[v]

Despite its globalist perspective, the traditional ES literature did focus on the study of historical regional international societies and investigated both their interaction and expansion tendencies.[vi] For example, Martin Wight examined the Greek and Persian international societies and explored their interaction both in times of peace and war.[vii] It is important to note that the work of the classical ES was to a significant degree influenced by Arnold Toynbee who investigated the genesis and disintegration of various civilisations[viii] as well as their interaction in space and time.[ix]

Although the ES' globalist perspective has its origins in the study of the establishment and expansion of a particular regional international society, namely the European society of states and its gradual transformation to the contemporary global international society, it needs to be acknowledged that for classical ES scholars the study of the European international society was not an object of attention in its own right but rather, it deemed to be important because the global international society was seen to be a consequence of the former's expansion.[x] This 'fixation on the global scale' meant that sub-global developments suffered both from conceptual underdevelopment and intellectual scepticism.[xi]

The anti-regionalism of classical ES writings has been recognised by those working within the reconvened English School. Those scholars realised that emphasis on global international society is insufficient as there are interactions between global international society, which has been analysed for long time, and regional level(s), whose existence has largely been neglected by the English School. As a result, the reconvened ES has sought to reconfigure its research agenda and focus more on the study of various world regions. Opening the regional level of analysis might have serious implications for understanding institutions and norms like sovereignty, diplomacy, balance of power and others which exist and are performed at both global and regional level as, in many cases, regions form their own sub-

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global (regional) international societies which co-exist with global international society. Yet concepts derived from a global perspective have significant purchase at the regional level.[xii] For example, Bull's distinction between an international system and an international society[xiii] and the social distinctions of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*[xiv] are particularly relevant.

The purpose of this chapter is to review the English School (ES) literature associated with the study of sub-global international societies.

There is general agreement among ES scholars that the global international society of today is a 'thin' one, in the sense that it is pluralistic and heterogeneous; and that within the bounds of that society, there are several 'more thickly developed' 'regional clusters' in which the solidarist elements of international society are developed to a greater degree.[xv] According to Barry Buzan, because the logic of anarchy works more powerfully over shorter rather than longer distances and because states living in close proximity with one another may also share elements of common culture, *gemeinschaft* types of international societies may exist within the confines of a global international society.[xvi] These, moreover, are places where a modern standard of 'civilisation' is at its most developed.[xvii] Moreover, Buzan argues that the uneven development of international society means that some parts of the contemporary global system have more developed regional international societies than others.[xviii]

While earlier reassessments, contending with the effects of globalisation, focused on differences with regard to institutions and major actors of international society[xix] more recently, I and my colleagues have taken a critical stance in relation to the current assessments of global international society by examining international society from the perspective of regions.[xx] Our main purpose is to explore whether the development of international society at the regional level promotes or undermines the global international society. Confronting the puzzle presented by the increasing regionalisation of world politics and the impact that this process has had on international society, we have taken as our point of departure the fact that the re-scaling of world politics towards the regional dimension challenges to a certain extent the validity of the global international society framework. In so doing, we address questions like: what is global international society today? Does global order require the existence of a global international society? What does the uneven historical development of international society mean for global and regional orders? How global norms are understood at the regional level? Is there any interaction between regional international societies and, if yes, then what does this interaction tell us about global order?

Three pillars sustain the purpose and the rationale of their effort: first, the need to inquire about new regional normative dynamics within the ES (i.e. to shed light on how and why international norms and institutions assume different contours and meanings in different regional contexts when the level of analysis shifts from the global to the regional level); second, the need to take into account geographical, as well as institutional diversity within international society; and third, the need to think more thoroughly of how norms and rules travel from one level to another, both presently and in the past.

The question about the role of regions and the effects they have on global international society has become even more pertinent with the emergence (or re-emergence) of several regional powers.[xxi] It is now legitimate to speak of several regional international societies with their own structural and normative frameworks divergent from the global level. Since the main challenge for international society as a research project rests on capturing common interests, managing unequal power and mediating divergent values,[xxii] how to respond to the regional phenomenon in its normative and structural disclosure is the key question for international society scholars.

In the ES literature, the Western community of states serves as the most obvious candidate for a sub-global international society. However, it has been demonstrated that the West constitutes a set of overlapping regional international societies with different degrees of thinness/thickness.[xxiii] Within this literature, 'Europe' occupies a central place not only because the region conforms to the basic defining condition of regional inter-state society, but also because the possibility exists (although it will be unevenly realised) for a broadly integrative and solidarist movement towards cooperation and convergence.[xxiv]

Roger Morgan has argued that some of the concepts used by the traditional ES scholars can help to illuminate the

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current functioning of the European Union (EU) seen as a body of states subject to a wide range of rules, both formal and informal.[xxv] Hartmut Behr also suggests that the idea and study of international society can be applied empirically to the EU as well as Europe as a whole.[xxvi] Thomas Diez and Richard Whitman have employed the ES concepts of 'international society', 'world society' and 'empire' to reconfigure the debate about the nature of EU governance and to compare the EU to other regional international systems.[xxvii]

Starting from Buzan's premise that regional international organisations may reflect the existence of regional international societies, I, Mark Webber and our colleagues have sought to demonstrate that NATO, the EU, the Council of Europe (CoE) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) point to the institutionalisation of international society at the sub-global/European level.[xxviii] Examining the EU, Thomas Diez, Ian Manners and Richard Whitman conduct a comparison between the EU as a regional international society and the global international society as analysed by Hedley Bull. They argue that the five core institutions of international order identified by Bull (balance of power, international law, diplomacy, war and great powers) have been modified or replaced. As a result, they identify the new institutions of the European order as the pooling of sovereignty, the *acquis communautaire*, multilevel multilateralism, pacific democracy, member state coalitions and multiperspectivity.[xxix]

In a more recent article, Bettina Ahrens and Thomas Diez argue that the EU forms a regional international society that has transcended the rules of Westphalian state-centred pluralism.[xxx] However, they point out that the analysis of the consequences of this transcendence for global international society has, so far, been limited. For the most part, such studies have focused on the EU as a normative power, and even within that literature, there is much more attention given to the question of whether the EU acts as a normative power rather than to the consequences of its actions. This is intriguing given that Ian Manners, who originally coined the term, thought of the EU's ability to fundamentally transform the pluralist international society as the ultimate litmus test of normative power. By focusing on the issues of human rights and regionalisation, Ahren and Diez explore this question further and demonstrate that the EU contributes to a solidarisation of international society. In this sense, European Regional International Society (ERIS) does not undermine, but instead promotes, a global international society based on European/western norms and values.

Focusing on the transatlantic alliance, Webber contends that during the Cold War, NATO was part of the 'thick' or solidarist end of European international society characterised by a convergence of values, and a sense of cooperative endeavour and common community. This core of 'liberal solidarism' stood alongside a 'thinner' pan-European international society, characterised by pluralist features of state co-existence, limited cooperation and the dominance of procedural mechanisms, such as the balance of power, diplomacy and international law, for managing international politics. According to Webber, NATO's post-Cold War development, and particularly its experience of enlargement, has modified this picture in some respects. Enlargement has provided the basis for an extension of the 'thick' core of European international society as new members have become enmeshed in the institutional, political and social practices associated with the Alliance. He concludes that in seeking to consolidate both the thicker (solidarist) and thinner (pluralist) ends of European international society spectrum NATO has managed to succeed fully in neither enterprise.[xxxi]

I and Mike Habegger suggest that the CoE was and remains an essential component of ERIS and that the evolving structures and functions of organisation demonstrate an ongoing commitment to a homogeneous European regional international society.[xxxii]

Examining the OSCE, Georgeta Pourchot argues that the organisation has developed most of the elements necessary for a sub-global international society. She notes that the OSCE displays elements of both 'solidarism' and 'pluralism' and contributes to a thin-thick continuum of international society in a manner that is functionally and structurally relevant.[xxxiii] Similar conclusions have been reached by Habegger and I in our own study of the organisation.[xxxiv] Pourchot also demonstrates that some of the institutions of international society identified by Bull, such as the balance of power, international law and diplomacy are at work within the framework of the organisation concerned.[xxxv]

Another strand within the Europe-related ES literature focuses on the development of sub-European international

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societies. For example, Laust Schouenborg analyses the formation of a Scandinavian international society over a 200-year period and develops the concepts of 'primary institution' and 'binding forces' as an analytical framework.[xxxvi]

One of the main research themes developed by the classical ES was the study of relations between the historical European international society and the states located on its periphery, such as Russia and Turkey.[xxxvii] It is interesting, therefore, to see what kind of relations exist currently between the core of ERIS, on the one hand, and Russia and Turkey, on the other.

According to Richard Sakwa, although Russia has formally adopted Western democratic norms, their implementation is impeded by both practical and political forms of resistance to the universalism proclaimed by the West.[xxxviii] He argues that Russia does not reject the norms advanced by the main institutions of European international society, but it objects to what it sees as their instrumental application. Sawka points out that as a neo-revisionist power, Russia insists on respect for territorial and governmental sovereignty. Consequently, he concludes, Russia does not repudiate engagement with international society, but at present is ready only for a relatively 'thin' version.

Pami Aalto argues that the EU offers Russia access to regional level international society with a 'thicker' set of institutions than are available in its relations with the United States and the Asian countries.[xxxix] The fact that Russia identifies itself with Europe has driven it to experiment with some of the solidarist institutions typifying EU-centred societies, most notable the market. Therefore, the ambivalence one may observe in the current relations between the core of ERIS and Russia is not very different from the ambivalence of the historical relations between the core of the European society of states and Russia.

Finally, Iver Neumann argues that Russia's rationality of government deviates from present-day hegemonic neo-liberal models by favouring direct state rule rather than indirect governance. As a result, he expects that the West will not recognise Russia as a full-fledged great power.[xl] Here, it should be noted that Neumann does not argue that Russia is not a great power. Adopting the ES understanding of the role of great powers, he rather argues that Russia will not be accepted by Western powers as one of the custodians of international order.

It seems that Russia's treatment of Ukraine and the reaction of the US and the EU to Russia's involvement and policies undermine Aalto's assessment while strengthening Neumann's claim.

While Turkey is regarded as an integral part of ERIS, yet it is not included in its core organisation, namely the European Union. Bahar Rumelili suggests that the EU relations with Turkey continue to be situated at the intersection of Europe's particularist impulses and universalist ambitions and the construction of European and Turkish identities vis-à-vis each other is likely to remain an important arena of contestation.[xli] Some work of mine has provided a comparison between the treatment of Turkey by the EU and the treatment that the Ottoman Empire received from members of the historical European international society and identifies many similarities between the two processes.[xlii]

Another strand of ES scholarship focuses on the study of international society in other world regions to find out what factors contribute to their strength or weakness. For example, relating the study of regional international societies to the study of regional security in various world regions, Barry Buzan and Ole Waever have demonstrated how the presence or absence of mature regional international societies condition (in)security at the regional level.[xliii]

Applying ideas about international and world society to the Middle East, Barry Buzan, Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez and their colleagues provide a comprehensive overview of the history of the region and how its own traditions have mixed with the political structures imposed by the expansion of Western international society. They argue that the Middle East forms a sub-global international society that can be distinguished from the broader international system. However, this society has not reached a maturity degree comparable to that of the European regional international society.[xliv] Moreover, their work reveals the powerful and ongoing tensions among the Western-defined political order, the post-colonial state system and the strong transnational cultural elements in the region. Yet, it shows both the problems and the opportunities of thinking about international and world society in a regional context and uses the insights from

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that to cast new light on what it means to talk about international society at the global level.

Ayla Göl's recent work also explores the contested nature of a regional interstate society in the Middle East and demonstrates why global and regional international societies mutually evolve.[xlv] Göl explores the dynamics of complex interplay between global and regional international societies in the context of the expansion of international society and 'revolt against the West'. Focusing on the state, nationalism, and a common culture and civilisational identity as the social structure of a regional international society, Göl concludes that global and regional international societies mutually evolve despite civilisational differences.

In the past quarter century, the importance of Asia in international relations has grown exponentially. The international society approach of the ES has been one among several theories that have been utilised for explaining Asia's evolving position in international relations both within Asia and with the rest of the world.[xlvi]

Barry Buzan, Yongjin Zhang and their colleagues investigate whether or not significant and distinct international social structures exist in East Asia and what this can tell us about international society both regionally and globally.[xlvii] They argue that the regional dispute over how its states and peoples should relate to the Western-dominated global international society makes the existence of East Asian international society essentially contested. While this regional-global social dynamic is present in many world regions, it is particularly strong in East Asia.

In response to the excessive universalism in the ES theorisation, Zhang has conducted a critical investigation of the development of international society in East Asia.[xlviii] He looks at how primary institutions of the Westphalian society of states, such as sovereignty and imperialism, are imposed upon and resisted by East Asian states in remaking international relations in East Asia and in dismantling the traditional regional order. Zhang considers the way in which East Asian states creatively accept, interpret, engage in and practice certain primary institutions of Western-global international society, sovereignty and market in particular, on their own terms in the post-colonial context. Variations in interpretation and practice of these two primary institutions, he argues, amount to East Asian regional contestations to Western-global international society. Zhang also examines the peculiar features of great power management as a primary institution as it operates and is practiced in East Asia and reflects on how in terms of both power politics and political economy the regional and the global are mutually constitutive. In so doing, he offers a social structural view of contested existence of regional international society in East Asia, with an emphasis on understanding the contingent nature of the emergence of regional international society, its fluid existence, and the problematic nature of its social boundaries.

Wang Qiubin focuses on the Northeastern Asia regional international society and argues that this did not come into being until the end of the Cold War, when the states recognised mutually sovereign equality. Qiubin argues that compared to the EU, regional international society is not mature in Northeast Asia and the core principles of the Westphalian system, such as territoriality and sovereignty still dominate the region.[xlix]

Connecting the ES approach with the increasingly important region of Southeast Asia, Linda Quayle offers a comprehensive assessment of this region-theory linkage.[l] In a more recent article, Quayle utilises the ES' pluralist/solidarist spectrum to map and compare responses to the issue of migrant workers.[li] According to Quayle, this case suggests three things: first, the complexity of the relationship between global and regional societies is exacerbated by the starkly diverging pluralist and solidarist streams within the former; second, that the informal, consensus-orientated methods of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, though often criticised, have proved useful at global level in moving dialogue forward in this contentious area; and third, that regional international societies provide highly salient arenas for dealing with this issue, but still struggle with inter-regional difference and trans-regional challenges.

Building upon theoretical contributions from the ES, John Anthony Pella Jr. analyses how West-Central Africa and West-Central Africans were integral to the ways in which Europe and Africa came together from the fifteenth century through to the twentieth.[lii] His analysis demonstrates that the expansion of international society was driven by individual interaction, and was shaped by both Africans and Europeans.

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Elaine Tan addresses the development of international society in Africa by analysing the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).[liii] Tan views APRM as a platform through which an African international society and global international society have interacted. She begins her analysis by pointing out that the presence of regional international societies implies the presence of differentiation in global international society, and the possibility of a breakdown in global consensus and the fragmentation of global international society. However, Tan argues that while divergences between African and global international societies on democracy and political governance result in tensions, the APRM can be seen as a way to mediate and reconcile these divergent positions. This has to be seen in the context of an unequal global international society, dominated by a number of core states with an increasingly solidarist governance agenda, as well as the attempts of a largely pluralist African international society to manage its demands. While the APRM might represent an uneasy and unstable compromise, this suggests that the relationship between regional and global international societies is significantly shaped by the ability and willingness of states to create possibilities for such compromises.

Working from the perspective of the ES, Federico Merke provides a historical account of the development of international relations in South America and argues that the presence of a number of shared values and institutions among regional states offers the foundations for a distinct regional international society.[liv] Merke also examines the strategic positioning of Brazil in South America and how South America relates to Brazil's rising status both globally and regionally.[lv] He argues that Brazil shares a number of values and institutions with its neighbours that contribute to the existence and function of a distinct regional international society in South America. He thus challenges the materialist stance held by realism which envisages that secondary powers either balance or bandwagon the dominant pole and affirms instead that South America's strategies towards Brazil are more complex and nuanced than a simple polarity standpoint suggests.

It appears that the post-Soviet space has attracted the attention of ES scholars interested in the study of sub-global international societies. For example, in my own work I explore the entry of Russia into what Boris Yeltsin called 'community of civilised states'.[lvi] To this end, I examine the changes that the Russian Government under President Yeltsin had to introduce in order to achieve the country's admission into post-Cold War international society. I argue that these changes included the democratisation of the Russian political system, the transformation of the Russian economic system into a free market economy, and the integration of Russian foreign policy into the broader society of states.

Katarzyna Kaczmarek's work focuses on Russia and its 'near abroad'.[lvii] She argues that following the end of the Cold War and throughout the 1990s Russia was seeking to re-join the global international society. Among other things, this meant that Russia was expected to adjust and accept norms and rules established and propagated by mostly Western liberal states but hailed as common for the family of states. However, with Vladimir Putin's ascendance to power and the country's economic recovery followed by Moscow's more assertive stance on global affairs, Russia has increasingly been seen as the supporter of a pluralist vision of international society characterised by limited co-operation, respect for sovereignty and non-intervention. Kaczmarek argues that these depictions ignored the fundamental differences in Russia's approach towards relations between states in the regional and global perspective. While on the global scale Russia cherishes norms of sovereignty and non-intervention, the regional realm has been subject to a variety of moves compromising the sovereignty of post-Soviet states. For example, in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Russia has been ready and willing to engage in undermining states' sovereignty in a number of ways, such as attempting to establish a sphere of influence, directly intervening in a civil strife, policing borders, waging wars on 'humanitarian' grounds and stimulating separatisms, as well as undertaking less explicit interventionist activities of regional integration, security provision and development assistance. She concludes that Russia's approach to its most immediate neighbours cannot be subsumed under pluralist or solidarist vision of interstate relations and this highlights the difficulty of approaching the Russian global-regional split using the conceptual apparatus of the English School.

Georgeta Pourchot and I examine the degree of integration in Central Asia and suggest that within the contemporary heterogeneous global international society there exist some more homogeneous regional/sub-global international societies, with Central Asia constituting one of them.[lviii] We argue that during the Cold War the global international society was divided into two sub-global international societies, one of them formed by the Soviet Union and its allies.

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With the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia sought to re-establish its regional primacy through the establishment of a set of international organisations ranging from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

By analysing historical and contemporary discourses about Russia's civilisational status, Filippo Costa Buranelli explores an alternative way for the diffusion of norms and institutions of international society different from those of European 'expansion' or 'inclusion', namely that of 'mediated expansion'. In so doing, he views Russia as 'a periphery in the centre' and as a 'less civilized civilizer' in European international society. He discusses the penetration of the Russian Empire in Central Asia in a socio-historical perspective and argues that in the process of the expansion, Russia's Asiatic past weakened its status as a European power and the value of its colonial enterprise.[lix]

Arctic international relations are a complex of political, economic, development and militaristic dimensions. Throughout the Cold War, the Arctic was a region of symbolic military competition between the United States and Soviet Union. However, post-Cold War conditions in conjunction with climate change have transformed the Arctic into an important world region in the sense that states began to assert their claims of national sovereignty over areas previously considered inaccessible. This has had important implications for the Arctic regional order.[lx]

Oran R. Young has been a key participant in debates among international relations scholars about the dynamics of rule-making and rule-following in international society. He weaves together theoretical issues relating to the formation of international regimes and substantive issues relating to the emergence of the Arctic as a distinct region in world affairs.[lxi] Young discusses the international linkages involved in the institutional arrangements in the international society and highlights various types of linkages that give rise to the concept of an institution including the idea of institutional nesting, overlapped regime and clustered institution.[lxii] He then examines the nature as well as the significance of the above-mentioned institutional linkages in the international society with particular focus on the Arctic region.

Following Young's pioneer work, Robert Murray, Anita Dey Nuttall and their colleagues demonstrate the multifaceted and essential nature of circumpolar politics.[lxiii] Their work provides the theoretical tools necessary to approach the study of the Arctic and includes comprehensive studies of the policies of the eight Arctic states, a discussion about those non-Arctic states pursuing Arctic goals of their own, and the various international institutional bodies and frameworks that address Arctic issues.

The fact that *gemeinschaft* types of regional international societies may exist within the confines of a global *gesellschaft* type of international society raises the possibility that some of them may face the challenge of expanding into regions with their distinctive cultures. For example, it has been convincingly shown that the EU constitutes a regional homogeneous international society embedded in a heterogeneous European international system.[lxiv] Through the process of enlargement, however, the regional homogeneous European international society (EU) expands outward, gradually transforming the heterogeneous European international system, in which it is embedded, into a more homogeneous regional European international society.[lxv]

But how do expanding *gemeinschaft* societies incorporate members, which do not share their culture? Because the standard of 'civilisation' has fallen into disrepute, other standards have risen to take its place. Of particular importance is the standard of 'democracy', which encompasses several other associated concepts such as respect for human rights, the rule of law, and liberal economic development. This, along with its portrayal as a timeless universal concept, provides democracy with an advantage in the expansion of regional international societies. As such, democratisation has become a stand-in for the civilising project.[lxvi] Drawing on the example of the EU, I have argued that 'membership conditionality' serves a role similar to that of the historical standard of 'civilisation'.[lxvii] I have demonstrated the similarity between the contents of the Copenhagen criteria, whose purpose is to regulate the EU enlargement (expansion) process, and the contents of the standard of 'civilisation', and argued that unless candidate states fulfil these criteria, they cannot be admitted into the EU.[lxviii] Democracy promotion thus became a central dynamic of enlargement not only for the EU but also for other European international organisations, such as the CoE and NATO.[lxix] European regional international society has consequently become heavily reliant on forms

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of conditionality and monitoring.

The imposition of the European historical international society upon the rest of the world provided the classical ES with an opportunity to study the interaction between regional international societies. However, the interaction between contemporary regional international societies has only recently attracted the attention of ES scholars. For example, I have been interested in investigating the interaction between ERIS, on the one hand, and the post-Soviet and Middle East international societies on the other.[lxx]

Thomas Linsenmaier has put forward a conceptualisation of various types of relationships that unfold between regional international societies.[lxxi] In this context, the traditional notion of 'expansion' is found wanting in capturing the full range of relationships and is complemented by forms of co-existence and confrontation. Understood as ideal types, the three concepts (expansion, co-existence, clash) serve as analytical tools for making sense of the varied nature of inter-regional encounters. This is illustrated with regard to the relationship between the European international society and its Eastern neighbours in the aftermath of the 2004 EU enlargement. A more nuanced reading of the inter-regional highlights a constellation quite different from 'expansion' where the European society does not push into empty space but reaches out into an alternative order, opening the possibility of a clash between the European and a consolidating post-Soviet regional international society.

Since the creation of the contemporary global international society has been the result of the European expansion and the superimposition of the European society of states upon other co-current regional international societies, I and my colleagues have sought to examine the perceptions that people and states in various parts of the world hold about Europe and the European Union in order to find out whether these perceptions have anything to do with the historical expansion of Europe.[lxxii] Our work has revealed that some of these perceptions can be partly attributed to the historical expansion of Europe and partly to EU policies that resemble those of the past.

It has been argued that for regional international societies to exist in their own right, they should have institutions that differ from those of the global international society. However, recent ES literature has shown that although the same institutions may operate both at the global and sub-global levels they may be given different interpretations or being the subject of a different understanding at the regional level. This implies that it is still possible for sub-global international societies to exist.

Jorge Lasmar, Danny Zahreddine and Delber Andrade Gribel Lage have mapped the reach of key universal norms and rules of Human Rights Law in international society while also mapping, at the same time, specific regional interpretations and practices of such norms.[lxxiii] This mapping exercise contributes to the ES research agenda and its discussions of regions by trying to trace a clearer picture of the normative and institutional borders within international society and thus provide an additional tool to understand how regional norms and practice constitute, interact and redefine the global international society. According to the authors, by mapping the normative architecture of the primary institution of international law through its key Human Rights' universal norms and rules it is possible to undertake a geographic analysis of its diffusion and density throughout international society. Hence, it is also possible to visually assess the reach of norms we take for granted as being universal. On the other hand, they argue, the mapping of regional interpretations and practices of 'global' norms allows identifying if these regionalisms do construct coexistent regional clusters of different 'international' normative systems within the system-level institution governing international society.

In a similar fashion, Costa-Buranelli argues that while regional international societies can adopt more or less institutions than those at the global level, they may take some institutions present at the global level to mean something different.[lxxiv] He demonstrates that the development of regional international societies is favouring the polysemy of institutions, whereby different international societies adopt the same institutions with different meanings and specific normative contents. His conclusion seems to strengthen Adda Bozeman's observation that although non-European political communities had to formally adopt European norms and institutions during the expansion of European society of states in practice they still assigned different meanings to these norms and institutions.[lxxv]

But if institutions exist at the global level and they are framed, interpreted and adopted differently in several regional

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international societies, what are the prospects for the existence of a global international society? Does it still make sense to speak of a global international society? And what methodological challenges does this polysemy pose to the English School? These very important questions have provided the fertile ground for further investigation by the new generation of ES scholars.

Notes

[i] Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (London: Macmillan, 1977).

[ii] See Barry Buzan, *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations* (Oxford: Polity, 2014); Cornelia Navari and Daniel Green, eds, *Guide to the English School in International Studies* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014); Andrew Linklater and Hidemi Suganami, *The English School of International Relations: A Contemporary Reassessment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Alex Bellamy, ed., *International Society and Its Critics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); and Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society* (London: Macmillan 1998).

[iii] Hedley Bull and Adam Watson, eds, *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984).

[iv] See Andrew Hurrell, *On Global Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Ian Clark, *The Vulnerable in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Ian Clark, *Hegemony in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Ian Clark, *International Legitimacy and World Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); and Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[v] Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, 281.

[vi] See Hebert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds, *Diplomatic Investigations* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1966); and Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society* (London: Routledge, 1992).

[vii] Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977).

[viii] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Abridgement of vols I-VI (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947).

[ix] Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Abridgement of vols VII-X (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957); and Arnold Toynbee, *The World and the West* (London: Oxford University Press, 1953).

[x] Yannis A. Stivachtis and Mark Webber, 'Regional International Society in Post-Enlargement Europe', in *Europe After Enlargement*, eds Yannis A. Stivachtis and Mark Webber (London: Routledge, 2014), 9.

[xi] Barry Buzan, 'The Middle East through English School Theory', in *International Society and the Middle East: English School Theory at the Regional Level*, eds Barry Buzan and Ana Gonzalez-Pelaez (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 28.

[xii] Stivachtis and Webber, 'Regional International Society in Post-Enlargement Europe', 10.

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