to co-nationals (Havel 1999: 6). Others criticized NATO for what they saw as a breach of the UN Charter, for its highly selective approach to dealing with human rights violations and for acts of violence which compounded the misery of the local population (Chomsky 1999a). The debate over the war against Iraq has deepened these divisions, with some such as Blair arguing that the war was justified not only because the regime was a danger to other societies but because it was guilty of gross violations of human rights. Others argue that the American and British governments are guilty of placing themselves above international society by acting outside the UN system where each state has legal equality (although Bush and Blair have maintained that they are defending that society by developing new principles such as the doctrine of preventive war in the face of previously unimagined threats). The echoes of an older tension between the 'pluralist' and 'solidarist' conceptions of international society can be heard in these different reactions to how to deal with human rights violators and with regimes that are deemed to be 'outlaws' in international society. It remains to be seen whether the society of states can agree on the need for intervention in the case of supreme humanitarian emergences while at the same time resisting any more general attempt to weaken respect for the principle of non-intervention' (Roberts 1993; see also Vincent and Wilson 1994). In examining the diplomacy which surrounds such debates, the English School comes into its own.

Progress in international relations

Quite how far progress in international relations is possible is one of the most intriguing questions in the field. In one essay, Wight (1966: 26) maintained that the international system is 'the realm of recurrence and repetition', a formulation which is repeated in Waltz's classic statement of neo-realism (Waltz 1979: 66). The argument of this chapter is that the English School is principally about progress in the form of agreements about how to maintain order and, to a lesser degree, about how to promote support for principles of justice. Bull's writings on this subject often suggested that order is prior to justice, the point being that international order is a fragile achievement and that states have been unable to agree on the meaning of global justice. At times, Bull seems to be aligned with what Wight described as the 'realist' wing of rationalism but, on other occasions, he is much closer to its 'idealist' wing (Wight 1991: 59). Towards the end of his life, it has been argued, Bull moved significantly towards a more 'solidarist' point of view (see Dunne 1998: Chapter 7).

This apparent change of heart is most pronounced in the Hagey Lectures delivered at the University of Waterloo in Canada in 1983 (Bull 1984b). It is illustrated by the comment that 'the idea of sovereign rights existing apart from the rules laid down by international society itself and enjoyed without qualification has to be rejected in principle', not least because 'the idea of the rights and duties of the individual person has come to have a place, albeit an insecure one' within the society of states 'and it is our responsibility to seek to extend it' (Bull 1984b: 11–12). The 'moral concern with welfare on a world scale' was evidence of a 'growth of … cosmopolitan moral awareness' which amounted to 'a major change in our sensibilities' (1984b: 13). The changing global agenda made it necessary for states to become the 'local agents of a world common good' (1984b: 14).

It would be a mistake to suggest that Bull had come to think that solutions to global problems would be any easier to find and that 'terrible choices' would no longer have to be made (1984b: 14). Scepticism invariably blunted the visionary impulse. This is clear from his observation that new, post-sovereign political communities might yet develop in Western Europe. An intriguing passage in *The Anarchical Society* (1977) states that the time may be ripe for new principles of regional political organization which recognize the need for sub-national, national and supranational tiers of government but reject the notion that any of them should enjoy exclusive sovereignty (Bull 1977: 267). A 'neo-medievalist' Western Europe could 'avoid the classic dangers of the system of sovereign states' by encouraging 'overlapping structures and criss-crossing loyalties' (1977: 255). But such a world would not be free from dangers. Medieval international society, with its complex structure of overlapping jurisdictions and multiple loyalties, had been even more violent than the modern system of states (1977: 255). Bull (1979b) set out a qualified defence of the society of states which argued, against the revolutionists, that most states still play a 'positive role in world affairs'. Despite its many faults, the society of states was unlikely to be bettered by any other form of world political organization in the foreseeable future.

We have considered how the English School differs from realism and neo-realism; it is now necessary to turn to its assessment of 'revolutionism' and the various critiques of the international society of states which have been developed by advocates of that perspective. Bull (1977: 22) argued that the essence of revolutionism can be found in the Kantian belief in 'a horizontal conflict of ideology that cuts across the boundaries of states and divides human society into two camps – the trustees of the immanent community of mankind and those who stand in its way, those who are of the true faith and the heretics, the liberators and the oppressed'. The Kantian interpretation of international society believed that diplomatic

conventions should be set aside in the quest for the unification of humankind. 'Good faith with heretics' had no intrinsic value; it had no more than 'tactical convenience' because 'between the elect and the damned, the liberators and the oppressed, the question of mutual acceptance of rights to sovereignty or independence does not arise' (1977: 24).

Many writers, including Stanley Hoffmann (1990: 23–4), have argued that Kant was 'less cosmopolitan and universalist in his writings on international affairs than Bull suggests'. Indeed, for all his cosmopolitanism Kant defended a society of sovereign states which respected the principle of non-intervention. For this reason, 'Kantianism' seems an inappropriate term for describing a group of visionary perspectives which Bull and Wight ultimately rejected. The idea of revolutionism is also troubling because it groups together thinkers as diverse as Kant, Lenin (who defended the violent overthrow of the bourgeois international order) and Gandhi (who believed in non-violent resistance). However, what most troubled English School thinkers such as Bull and Wight was the 'revolutionist' belief that peace will not come about in international relations until all societies share the same universal ideology. Wight thought that Kant believed that peace would exist only when the whole world consisted of republican states (Wight 1991: 421–2), although recent scholars have challenged this interpretation (MacMillan 1995). The important point to comprehend, however, was that the English School has defended international society from those who are intolerant of its deficiencies, impatient to see change and keen to use force and chicanery to bring other societies round to their preferred ideology. There is a parallel here with those classical realists who were opposed to the crusading mentality in international relations (see Chapter 3 in this volume).

Wight always stressed that 'rationalism' overlapped with realism and revolutionism. We have seen one point of convergence between realism and the English School. One point of overlap between the English School and revolutionism can be found in Wight's lectures where he described Kant as like the rationalist who is first and foremost 'a reformist, the practitioner of piecemeal social engineering' (Wight 1991: 29). The classic works of the English School tended to shy away from visions of how the world could or should be organized. In Bull's case, this was because there was no reason to suppose that political philosophers would succeed where diplomats had repeatedly failed, namely in identifying moral principles which all or most societies could regard as the foundations of an improved international order. On the other hand, Bull's argument that international order must ultimately be judged by what it contributes to world order, and Wight's claim that the main political task is to promote order and security 'from which law, justice and prosperity may afterwards develop', both suggest that something can be said about the direction

which international society should ideally take. Interestingly, this might have taken Bull and Wight closer to Kant, who thought the challenge was to build law and civility not only within or between separate states but across the whole of world society. Some thinkers such as Habermas (1997), who see their task as building on Kant's thought, believe this goal is best achieved by developing international criminal law and by creating cosmopolitan democratic institutions which will work to ensure that all global actors (states, multinational corporations (MNCs) and so forth) are accountable to those they affect.

What is principally at stake here is the question of how states and other actors can create a world community without jeopardising the existence of the society of states. Interestingly, Bull (1969/1995) thought that Karl Deutsch's writings on 'security communities' (communities whose members have renounced the use of force in their relations with one another in accordance with a heightened sense of 'we-feeling') were 'pregnant with implications for a general theory of international relations'. Deutsch, Bull argued, was unusual in reflecting on different types of political community, on their 'distinguishing features', on the 'elements' that provide for their 'cohesion' and, crucially, on the extent of their 'responsiveness' to the interests and well-being of other peoples (Bull 1966b). This interest in Deutsch's thinking is unsurprising because a society of states can exist only if independent political communities are sensitive to one another's legitimate economic and political interests and tolerant of diverse moral and cultural standpoints (Wight 1991: 120, 248). Similarly, the development of the elements of a world community, however rudimentary, depends on the extent to which states are moved by 'purposes beyond themselves' – not only by maintaining order between separate, sovereign states but by promoting a world order which is concerned with security and justice for individuals (Bull 1973: 137). These are themes which became more important to the English School with Bull's later solidarism, Vincent's defence of the universal human right to be free from starvation, in Dunne and Wheeler's essays on human rights and good international citizenship and in Wheeler's argument for intervention in the case of 'supreme humanitarian emergencies' and for stronger protection for civilians in times of war. The common theme here is the need for greater international cooperation, not to impose a set of moral principles on reluctant states but to do as much as possible to help what Dunne and Wheeler (1999) have called 'suffering humanity'.

Before drawing this chapter to a close it is useful to note how the English School stands in relation to some other current branches of International Relations theory. There is a parallel between the English School's study of international society and neo-liberal institutionalist

arguments about how cooperation is possible even in the context of anarchy. Members of the English School have not followed neo-liberal institutionalists by using game theory to explain how cooperation can evolve between rational egotists (Keohane 1989a). Indeed, the notion that international theory can start with rational egotists is anathema to members of the English School, who believe that the interests of states are always defined in relation to, and shaped, by the moral and legal principles of international society. There is a parallel with constructivism (see Chapter 8 in this volume) which claims that state interests are socially constructed and influenced by global norms. Similarly, members of the English School agree with constructivism that anarchy is to use Wendt's famous phrase, 'what states make of it' (Wendt 1992). Likewise, both schools see sovereignty not as an unchanging reality of world politics but as a phenomenon whose meaning alters in accordance with shifting ideas about, for example, the place that human rights should have in international society. As Bull points out, states can make an international system or an international society out of the condition of anarchy, and there are times when they may be able to make their society conform with some basic principles of human justice (see also Wight 1977 and Reus-Smit 1999). Nothing is pre-ordained here; everything depends on how states think of themselves as separate political communities and what they take to be their rights against, and duties to, the rest of humankind. This is why members of the English School have been especially interested in the legal and moral dimensions of world politics, in the relationship between order and justice in international affairs, in how much progress states have made in creating society and whether or not they are likely to succeed in building a world community.

Reference was made earlier to the extent to which critical approaches have influenced the English School (see p. 88). It is also the case that different branches of critical theory (whether derived from the Frankfurt School or from postmodern approaches – see Chapters 6 and 7 in this volume) have also drawn on English School writing (Der Derian 1987; Linklater 1998). Members of the English School have long had an interest in cultural diversity in international politics and in some ways predate postmodern inquiries into 'otherness'. The fourth chapter of Wight's *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (1991) reveals a close interest in approaches to the 'colonized other'. As noted, Bull and Watson's analysis of the expansion of international society displays a special concern with the revolt against the West and poses a question which has drawn the attention of various critical approaches to international relations, specifically whether culturally diverse societies can agree on any universal legal and moral principles or are destined to be divided over how far these express sectional interests and parochial preferences.

Understandably, the English School has devoted much attention to the 'diplomatic dialogue' between states (Watson 1982), while recognizing that states are often tempted to use force to realize their objectives or to resolve major differences. It is important to stress that Bull's analysis of the revolt against the West brought out moral differences between 'North' and 'South' which cannot be resolved by force but require the search for agreement through a process of dialogue. It has been argued that Bull's claim that the modern society of states should come to rest on the consent of all peoples, the majority of whom live in the poorest regions of the world, has been developed further in notions of 'cosmopolitan conversations' which hold that all human beings have the moral right to participate in making decisions that may adversely affect them (Linklater 1998: Chapter 6; Shapcott 1994). But it is important not to press these points too far. It is essential to remember that Bull had little time for visions of alternative forms of world political organization which stray too far from the practicalities of foreign policy; that Jackson gives expression to a powerful element in the English School approach when he argues that the role of the analyst is to understand the actual world of international politics rather than give vent to moral preferences; and that most members of the School doubt whether states – even the best-intentioned – have the political will, vision and competence to create a better form of world political organisation (Mayall 2000). It is perfectly possible that had they lived, Wight, Bull and Vincent would have applauded recent attempts to promote human rights, to weaken the principle of sovereign immunity and to prosecute those accused of committing war crimes; but they might not have been wholly surprised that the new humanitarian discourse has resulted in forms of violence such as the war against Iraq which have created new divisions in international society.

Conclusion

In *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919–1939*, E. H. Carr (1939/1945/1946: 12) argued that international theory should avoid the 'sterility' of realism and the 'naivety' of idealism. The English School can claim to have passed this test of a good international theory. They have analysed elements of society and civility which have been of little interest to realists. Although they have been principally concerned with understanding international order, they have also considered the prospects for global justice and some have made the moral case for creating a more just world order. Members of the English School are not convinced by utopian or revolutionist arguments which maintain that states can settle

their most basic differences about morality and justice. The idea that the English School is the *via media* between realism and revolutionism rests on such considerations.

The English School argues that international society is a precarious achievement but the only context within which more radical developments can take place. Advances in the global protection of human rights, they argue, will not occur in the absence of international order. It is to be expected that there will always be two sides to the English School: the side that is quick to detect threats to international society and the side that identifies ways in which that society might become more responsive to the needs of individuals and their various associations. The relationship between these different orientations changes and will continue to change in response to historical circumstances. The Cold War years did little to encourage the search for alternative principles of world order; the 'solidarist' conception of international society was deemed to be 'premature'. In many respects the passing of bipolarity was more conducive to the development of solidarism although discussions about whether states should intervene to prevent human rights violations have brought the 'solidarist' concern with individual rights into conflict with the 'pluralist' stress on the dangers involved in breaching national sovereignty. The age of American hegemony inevitably raises the question of whether the 'solidarist' theme has been hijacked by the dominant political interests in the United States and the United Kingdom, and whether the society of states now confronts new challenges to its survival. In contemporary debates about such matters, one can see echoes of the English School's long discussion about the relative importance of 'system', 'society' and 'community' in international affairs. Its reflections on these matters look certain to remain important for future efforts to understand the shifting sands of world politics.