The Contributions of the English School of the International Relations Theory to Foreign Policy Analysis: Transformational Social Ontology in the Three Traditions Approach and Methodological Pluralism

Paper for presentation at the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Joint Sessions, Granada, Spain, 14-19 April 2005
Workshop 8 Foreign Policy Analysis: Theory and Practice

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‘Can we in Europe develop an FPA which does not require us to buy into the positivism of US FPA?’ (S. Smith 1994: 13)

Introduction
Perennial ontological and epistemological dichotomies have long plagued and impoverished social theory (Ryan 1973; Keat and Urry 1975; Giddens 1979, 1984; Layder 1981, 1994; Giddens and Turner 1987; Bhaskar 1989; Archer 1995; Mouzelis 1995; Turner 1995; Parker 2000; Sibon)
2004). This fragmentation has regretfully had severe repercussions on the way we perceive and study international relations. That is to say, International Relations (IR) has become more and more a ‘dividing discipline’ because of the fault lines between structural holism and methodological individualism and between explanation and understanding. Some even claimed that this agent-structure *problematique* is not resolvable, for ‘there are always two stories to tell’ (Hollis and Smith 1990; S. Smith 1994).

The incommensurability thesis between levels of analysis in American IR (Waltz 1959; Singer 1961) has but added another dimension to the agent-structure *problematique*. The thesis simply claims that studies focusing on different levels in foreign policy-making – individual, sub-national, state, international- explain the same phenomenon differently. This paved the way for the gradual cutting Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) off from Theory of International Politics, despite their *prima facie* conceptualization by some as referring to ‘one and the same subject’ (Rosenau 1969). For the former exclusively focuses on unit-level (Frankel 1963; Synder et al. 1969; Allison 1971), the latter solely takes on system-level (Kaplan 1957; Waltz 1979). Although for a while, each side has simply either condemned or ignored the other in an uneasy coexistence, structural realism eventually prevailed. A large segment of American IR in 1980s was convinced that the second tier indeed ‘drops out’. Hence, it is only waste of time to try to understand domestic sources of foreign policy when anarchy socializes them into ‘functionally undifferentiated’ like-units. To cut a long and tragic story short, FPA in the Cold War decades has been gradually forced to sidelines in IR (Carlsnaes 2002: 331).

Nevertheless, we are now witnessing a renewed interest in FPA (Carlsnaes and Smith 1994; Manners and Whitman 2000; White 2001; Tonra 2001; Hill 2003; Carlsnaes et al. 2004; Tonra and Christiansen 2004a). Three reasons are commonly given as the source of this interest: systemic consequences of the unpredicted fall of the Berlin Wall, inspiration from the *sui generis* evolution of European integration process, and the obvious limitations of inherently conflationist forms of structural and agency-based IR theories in explaining these realities (S. Smith 1994; Tonra 2001: ch. 1; White 1999, 2004a; Hill 2003: ch. 1; Jorgensen 2004a). It is constantly argued that FPA as well as its conceptual universe are today ‘transformed’ in line with the transformed nature of European polity in particular and of international relations in general (White 1999, 2001). That is to say, the ‘transformed’ FPA explicitly distinguishes itself from its forerunners, the Cold War FPA and traditional FPA. However, finding commonalties true for all scholars of ‘transformed’ FPA is not as an easy task as pointing out differences with ‘others’, given their diverse methodological and theoretical commitments plus differentiating research questions. The scholars of ‘transformed’ FPA constitute an internally heterogeneous group. Yet, this paper claims that *inter alia* two metatheoretical points are valid and decisive for the whole ‘transformed’ FPA

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1 Throughout this paper, International Relations with capital letters denote the academic field, that with lower case the subject itself.

2 As Waltz (1979: 79) famously puts, ‘definitions of structure must leave aside, or abstract from, the characteristics of units, their behavior, and their interactions’.

3 ‘These kinds of questions, which do not refer directly to specific empirical explanatory problems in the way that substantive theories do, are stuff of metatheory and metatheoretical concepts such as ‘agency-structure’, ‘micro-macro’ and ‘time-space’. (…) In the social sciences substantive theories aim to generate new empirical information about the social world, whereas meta- or sensitizing theories and concepts are concerned with general ontological and epistemological understandings; metatheories and meta-concepts are designed to equip us with a general sense of the kinds of things that exist in the social world, and with ways of thinking about the question of how we might ‘know’ that world’ (Sibeon 2004: 13).
thinking: a social constructivist position in the agent-structure debate and a firm commitment to eclecticism. The first refers to an ontological assumption that social world of international relations influences actions of its mixed actors and is, in return, influenced by these interactions. White (2004a: 20) backs this as follows: ‘EFP [European foreign policy] clearly operates at different levels of analysis, most obviously at both the European and state levels. We need, therefore, an analytical perspective that enables us to explore the linkages between them’. The second means an open mindedness to any theoretical and empirical contribution to FPA. Because of ontological complexity and explanatory pragmatism, White (2004a: 23) claims that ‘an eclectic approach to theory-building is positively desirable’. I also find ‘synthetic approaches to FPA’ (Carlsnaes 1992: 256ff, 2002: 341ff) very necessary in order to overcome the ontological and epistemological impasses. However, some level of ambiguity still haunts the discussions on these presuppositions. With regard to the first, the questions that quickly come to mind are: Who are the actors? What is the criterion for actorness? What is the true nature of social context where actors are located? How are these two interrelated? Are they mutually constituted, or ontological distinct? Concerning the second, one can ask: Although FPA in principle welcomes all sorts of contributions, does this mean that ‘anything goes’ methodologically? If not, what is the criterion for selection? How sustainable is it to argue against uniting the conceptual framework of FPA in a grand theory? All in all, further thinking for making metatheoretical foundations of FPA clearer is overdue. I pragmatically believe that insights from other first- and second-order studies relevant to these two points would enrich FPA.

The English School (ES) (Manning 1962; Butterfield and Wight 1966; James 1973; Bull 1977; M.Wight 1977, 1978, 1991; Bull and Watson 1984; Vincent 1986; Watson 1992) has been one of those alternative ways of thinking to the ‘rationalist’ and ‘scientific’ study of international relations during Cold War decades. Although even once regarded as ‘a case for closure’, the ES has been successfully reconvened in late 1990s. The ‘new generation’ of the ES scholars has not only built on and elaborated the works of classical ES, but also intended to move beyond (Buzan 1993, 2001, 2004; Little 1998, 2000; Fawn and Larkins 1996; Roberson 1998; Dunne 1998, 2001a, 2001b; Waever 1998; Alderson and Hurrell 2000; Buzan and Little 2000; R. Jackson 2000; Wheeler 2000; see also Reus-Smit 1999; Rengger 2000; Stern 2000). This paper argues that it would be fruitful for the ‘transformed’ FPA to meet the ‘new generation’ ES. For two main metatheoretical characteristics of the latter would contribute to improve and clarify our conceptual understanding of the former: Its transformational social ontology in the Three Traditions Approach and its Methodological Pluralism. The Three Traditions Approach in the classical ES writings argues for a world of international relations where three core dynamics –namely, international system, international society, and world society- are in continuous existence and interplay (Bull 1977; M. Wight 1991; Little 2000). The ‘new generation’ of the ES scholars preserves but reinterprets this approach and claims that international/regional social structure, state actors and non-state actors always influence each other (Dunne 2001b; Buzan 2004). In this way, the world of international relations becomes nothing but a constant (re)making and becoming process. Though analytically and methodologically separable, these three are practically interlinked. In this conjunction, the Methodological Pluralism of the ES becomes an indispensable means not only to cope with the hypercomplex nature of international relations, but also to avoid various forms of reductionist cul de sac. In other words, the ES, like FPA, opts for a methodological opportunism in tandem with a social ontology. One has to recalibrate its methodology in line with the ontological content of her study, not vice versa.
This reminds one of the realist social theory (Bhaskar 1989; Archer 1995, 2000; cf. Wendt 1987; Dessler 1989; Carlsnaes 1992; C. Wight 1999). Hence, one of the aims in this paper is to show that to a great extent the transformational social ontology the Three Traditions Approach employs is identical to that in the realist social theory.\(^4\)

The paper is composed of three parts. The first part makes a genealogical evaluation of FPA in order to figure out metatheoretical continuities and discontinuities in FPA. Then two central metatheoretical points are elaborated. The second part does the same for the ES with the same aim. The last part seeks to connect these.

**On genealogy and metatheory of the ‘transformed’ FPA**

One can understand two things from FPA. As a **subject matter**, it simply refers to ‘the fundamental issue of how organized groups, at least in part strangers to each other, interrelate’ (Hill 2003: xvii). Furthermore, it is one of the most crucial, if not the most crucial, issue(s) to be handled with care since it involves the question of survival in human life. It has also a much long history. From the very beginning, people have spent considerable efforts to understand the nature of this vital social practice. As Yunus (2003: 1) puts, ‘the inception in human affairs of foreign relations and the need for policy to deal with them is as old as the organization of human life in groups. Foreign policy thus goes back to primitive times’. On the other hand, FPA has also been an **academic field of study** for at least last four decades. Of course, this does not mean that the topic has not been studied before. In fact, the seminal works of Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Kant confirm that it has been and very well. Here the usage points out a non-identity in terms of methodology, not of ontology. The scholars of Cold War FPA are differentiated from those of traditional FPA with regard to methods they used. That is to say, there has been, on the one hand, a consensus on **what is there to study and on the other hand, a disunity how to study until the end of the Cold War** (Carlsnaes 2002: 335; White 2004a: 11). The scholars of Cold War FPA have not only done research in a ‘specific’ way in order to explain the same explanandum better, but also been conscious of their methodological precepts. Nevertheless, the state-centric definition of foreign policy as ‘to find ways and means to preserve and to promote these vital interests of the state and have them recognized by other states’ (Yunus 2003: 70) would have made content all the ‘realist’ scholars of FPA until the end of the Cold War.

If one takes this discussion to the metatheoretical level, four conclusions -two ontological, one epistemological, one methodological- are arrived at. Firstly, both scholars are committed to an atomistic ontology. Each state (or better, each organized political collectivity) is a monolithic unit. A utilitarian logic also follows. A prince and his entourage are responsible for **raison d’etat** in each unit, that is to maximize national interest. Because these units are assumed to be only externally interrelated, that is, interests and identity of a unit are assumed as given and fixed. Atomism and

\(^4\) Throughout this paper, I will use concepts such as actors, social structure and agents as defined in terms of the realist social theory. Hence, it would be better to give only their ‘minimal’ definitions here, suspending further development of these concepts until the relevant parts of the paper. ‘An actor is something that has a capacity to formulate and take decisions and to act on some of them, the question of which decisions are acted upon, or can be acted upon, being an empirical matter’ (Sibeon 2004: 119). An actor can be a human being, but also a corporate actor, that is a non-human being. Social structure ‘refers to temporally enduring or temporally and spatially extensive circumstances, whether enabling or constraining, within which actors operate’ (Sibeon 2004:124). Another important point is that actors are ‘always agents of something’ (Archer 2000: ch.8; C. Wight 1999). In this sense, agents are in three types, none of which is reducible to two others: agent1 is an individual, agent2 is a collectivity or group, agent3 is a positioned-practice-place. I will call them respectively individual, corporate actor, role position throughout this paper to simplify.
utilitarianism makes state-centricism then inevitable. This ontology ignores any other unit than state by denying either their existence or their effectivity in foreign policy making.

Secondly, ontological holism has always been a troublesome concept. On the one hand, the scholars of traditional FPA were methodological individualist in the strict sense (Thucydides 1943; Machiavelli 1973; Morgenthau 1948; Kissinger 1957). They reduced interstate relations to Realpolitik game of handful ‘wise’ statesmen and political elites. They tend to explain all international outcomes through the inherent and immutable selfishness of human beings. The concept of structure/system was missing in their lexicon. On the other hand, the scholars of Cold War FPA were aware of the debates in social theory. They have read Parsons, Merton, and Elias. This gave them at least some level of general knowledge about what structure/system is all about. However, they had no clue about how to link unit level to system level. Most of them, therefore, remained attached to methodological individualism in the broader sense (i.e. conception of state as individual).

Thirdly, the scholars of Cold War FPA claimed to be methodologically ‘more rigorous’ than those of traditional FPA. For the former had to come to terms with the burgeoning challenge of the behavioralist revolution. Neurath, Carnap, early Wittgenstein, Popper have all become their must reading, in addition to Thucydides, Machiavelli, Morgenthau. They imported and used methods from natural sciences with the ultimate aim of uncovering social laws. As Carlsnaes underlined, the comparative study of foreign policy (CFP) is a good example here. ‘In this view foreign policy is seen as the exercise of influence in international relations, with ‘events’ specifying ‘who does what to whom, and how’. As a consequence, the task of collecting data on and analysing such events, with aim of generating and accumulating empirical generalizations about foreign policy behaviour, became a major industry within CFP’ (Carlsnaes 2002: 333, references omitted). However, collection or classification of data of social world is not so problem-free. It always involves interpretation. Tragically, an obsession with the quantitative methods blinded the scholars of Cold War FPA to this inevitably ‘double hermeneutic’ nature of any social scientific study.

This error was unavoidable for them, since, and this is the fourth point, the scholars of Cold War FPA were committed to a positivist epistemology. As Puchala (2003: 19-20) puts it nicely that ‘the positivist believes that knowledge about world can only be gained from sensory experience, that complex ideas (or facts) about the world are arrived at by combining simpler ideas, but that all complex ideas ultimately can be traced back to component simpler ideas acquired by sensory experience. What the positivist does not believe is also significant. He does not believe that alternative pathways to knowledge –that is, ways other than through sensory experience and the amalgamation of simple experience-born facts, are possible or indeed necessary. He does not therefore believe in metaphysics, or knowledge of reality gained through reasoning, contemplation, intuition (or in religion, which instills knowledge through revelation). Seeing, for positivist, is believing, and that which cannot be observed (or otherwise sensed) cannot be real’. It is safe to say

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5 It must be noted that several of them could not stop themselves committing reification sin by turning to various forms of teleological functionalism or Althusserian deterministic structuralism (Haas 1964,1969; Mitrany 1966).

6 To be sure, positivism is neither monolithic nor coherent body of philosophy of (social) science. Hence, there are many forms of positivism that cannot be lumped together (see for example, Halfpenny 1982, 2001). The usage here refers to logical positivism à la Vienna Circle for the latter inspired the Behavioralist Revolution in social sciences. Needless to say, the Cold War FPA by and large took these behavioralist metatheoretical assumption for granted without reflecting on its potential consequences.
that the scholars of traditional FPA would in no way share these epistemological assumptions. The second ‘Great Debate’ between the classical and scientific approaches to IR is, in this sense, very insightful (Knorr and Rosenau 1969; R. Jackson 2000: ch.3). The ‘traditionalists’ were approaching the subject from a humanist and normativist perspective. The behavioralist side accuses them of not being scientific in terms of both epistemology and methodology.

Today the scholars of ‘transformed’ FPA decidedly distinguish themselves from those of Cold War FPA on these two metatheoretical grounds. The very reality of ‘New Europe’ has, as White (2004a: 11) underscores, challenged them to do so. They reject dual theses of ontological atomism and the scientific method. These two metatheoretical points are exploited instrumentally first to show what is suspected, otherized, excluded; and second, to demonstrate what makes FPA today ‘transformed’.

With regard to the first, the ‘transformed’ FPA has a discourse against state-centricism (an ontological position). The reason is quite obvious: Traditional state-centric realism is not suitable for understanding high complexity of the EFP. White (2004a: 24) writes that ‘FPA is not wedded to traditional state-centric realism. (…) With respect to state centricity, there is no obvious reason why the perspective of and the analytical techniques associated with FPA cannot be transformed from the state to other international actors, or indeed to mixed actor system’. The key point here is the strong emphasis on ‘mixed actor system’. This move shifts the qualitative content of study away from the long-held realistic ontology of ‘states-system’. Consequently, the definition of foreign policy is broadened to ‘actions (broadly defined) taken by governments which are directed at the environment external to their state with the objective of sustaining or changing that environment in some way’ (White 2004a: 11) or to ‘the sum of official external relations conducted by an independent actor (usually a state) in international relations’ (Hill: 2003: 3).

Two conclusions, one actor-related and one system-related, follow. Firstly, it is argued that states are no more the only effective actors in international relations. For one thing, transnationalism is not a new phenomenon. It has been already acknowledged that transnational actors play significant roles in some international outcomes (Keohane and Nye 1971; Risse-Kappen 1995; Risse 2002). While transnationalism merely adds another name on the list of international players, the ‘transformed’ FPA preaches total breakdown of international/regional system(s) into its real constitutive components. Since states themselves are structures, an explanatory framework that perceives state as rock bottom makes a logical mistake. ‘The realist imagery of solid nation-states pursuing coherent national interests through efficient foreign policy-making processes, unchallenged by divisions within their governments or by domestic dissent, was always a simplification of the complexities of international relations’ (Hill and Wallace 1996: 10). In this way, neither unitary characteristics of states nor rationalist conception of national interest are to be taken for granted. Expectedly, the ‘transformed’ FPA strongly urges a theory of state. White (2004a: 29) puts this as follows: ‘the contested nature of statehood in Europe also means that foreign policy analysts can no longer avoid trying to develop an explicit theory of the state, an evident lacuna in traditional analysis’.

For one thing, IR field in general cannot help FPA by supplying one, for the absence of a theory of state also haunts the former. As Patrick Jackson (2004: 256) writes, ‘[e]ven with so much constructivist work in circulation, IR largely remains a field marked by an absence of theorising about its basic object of analysis’. So the answer is regretfully ‘none’ when Michael Smith (1994:}
29) asks ‘the state is one of the governing assumptions of FPA, and is frequently an unquestioned or unrecognized assumption. It is clear that such a silence about the state is impossible in the changed European context, but what theory is there which might provide the starting point for a critical analysis?’ That is to say, the ‘transformed’ FPA itself has had to develop a theory of state. To my knowledge, it has not yet accomplished this most urgent and vital mission. (More on this below.)

Secondly, actors never interact in a vacuum. The system where they are located imposes constraints on certain actions while enabling others. In other words, actors are always agents of a structure (C. Wight 2004: 275). This necessitates a holistic/systemic approach. International relations is a dynamic and social system, rather than static and material world as realists want us to believe. It is dynamic, because its nature can and does change through praxis of actors. Hence, it is fatally wrong to claim that ‘[t]exture of international politics remains highly constant, patterns recur, and events repeat themselves endlessly. (…) The enduring character of international politics accounts for the striking sameness in the quality of international life through the millennia, a statement that will meet with wide assent’ (Waltz 1979: 66) or ‘the fundamental nature of international relations is seen as being unchanged over the millennia. International relations continue to be a recurring struggle for wealth and power among independent actors in a state of anarchy’ (Gilpin 1981:7). It is social, because ideational, normative, discursive, and psychological elements are all interwoven with physical factors. It is fallacious to reduce an international system to ‘aggregate of material capabilities’ (Waltz1979: ch.5; cf. Buzan et al. 1993; Ruggie 1993; Wendt 1999). These necessitate a historical/transformational approach.

Breaking with (political) realist straitjacket, these two definitions open new spaces for the ‘transformed’ FPA. Any international outcome is unintended result of interplay between social system and its various actors. Hence, ‘there is arguably a need to complement the ‘macro’ approach of structuralism with some form or forms of ‘micro’, actor-centred analysis but one which, unlike the EU-as-actor approach, does not make inappropriate assumptions about single actoriness’ (White 2004a: 19). It is obvious that the ‘transformed’ FPA has to hold a social constructivist position in ontological terms because of ‘the need for a dynamic synthesis of structural and agential factors in the explanation of change’ (Carlsnaes 1992: 247). It, however, differs from Wendtian social constructivism for it also includes non-state actors (cf. Wendt 1999). Therefore, Wendtian systemic approach that brackets state and neglects non-state actors is not helpful when the ‘transformed’ FPA searches ways of conceptualizing its mixed-actors ontology.

Nor is neo-classical realism. Like the ‘transformed’ FPA, neo-classical realism in the US (Wohlforth 1993; Christensen 1996; Schweller 1998, 2003; Rose 1998; Zakaria 1998) tries to explain state actions as outcomes of complex unit-system interplays. ‘While not abandoning Waltz’s insights about international structure and its consequences, neo-classical realists have added first and second image variables (e.g., domestic politics, internal extraction capacity and processes, state power and intentions, and leaders’ perceptions of the relative distribution of capabilities and of the offense-defense balance) to explain foreign policy decision making and intrinsically important historical puzzles’ (Schweller 2003:317). Although this sounds a social constructivist position, it is in fact not. One can distinguish these two in ontological terms. The neo-classical realists presuppose an atomistic ontology in strict sense and privilege cognitive and psychological factors that affect individuals in decision-making processes. ‘Statesmen, not states, are the primary actors in international affairs, and their perceptions of shifts in power, rather than
objective measures, are critical’ (Zakaria 1998:42, my emphasis). In this way, the neo-classical realists not only make agent ontologically prior to structure, but also tend to take the latter for granted. Actually, they reduce structure to some cognitive factors in human mind. This form of reductionism prevents them from developing an understanding of how agents and structure interrelate.

How, then, to theorize state? Helpless though not hopeless, the ‘transformed’ FPA has, nonetheless, developed implicitly some elementary metatheoretical positions. I claim that these precepts on the ontological status of state can be united under two headings: 1) states should be conceptualized as unobservable yet real entities, for they have real causal powers 2) states should not be personified, and hence reified, for it is only through individuals in role-positions within state mechanisms that states interact with other actors and system (C. Wight 1999, 2004; cf. Wendt 2004).

Both 1 and 2 go against the dominant instrumentalist treatment of ‘state’ by the positivistic IR as only a ‘theoretical construct’. This instrumentalism is deeply problematic, for it bars any attempt for building a theory of state. As Colin Wight (2004: 269) neatly puts it, ‘[p]revious generations of scientifically orientated IR scholars, many of a positivist persuasion, have been happy to personify the state only insofar as this is understood as an instrumental device aimed at facilitating explanation. Talk of a state acting was admissible only as long as it was understood that this implied no ontological commitment to the state possessing any of the properties assigned to it’. In contrast to the mainstream IR, with its commitment to 1, the ‘transformed’ FPA opts for a (philosophical) realist definition of state. Therefore, it conceptualizes states as real corporate actors. Consequently, White (2004b: 47) underlines ‘the actor problem’ for structuralist approaches. How possibly a theoretical construct like state can defect or ‘free ride”? Even international cooperation between states would not occur, were states not real actors. For example, on the one hand, the EU states transformed the EPC framework, which they created in 1970, into the CFSP framework in 1991, on the other, they could not come to a common position on the US invasion of Iraq. Even the ongoing debate on ‘the retreat of state’ due to emergence of transnational actors (Strange 1996; Risse-Kappen 1995; Lawton et al. 2000), in a sense, acknowledges that states are real entities with real powers and properties. Otherwise, it would be indeed silly to discuss on excessively to what extend an ‘unreal’ entity like state has lost its power and mutated into a post-modern state.

Commitment to 2 counters both personifying state and rationalist reduction of state to sum of individuals. As Hill (2003: 20) puts it, ‘[t]he main ‘actors’ are conceived not as abstract entities but as the decision-makers who are formally responsible for making decisions for the units which interact internationally –that is, mainly but not exclusively states’. To put forward and substantiate the idea that these decision-makers can socialize into a group could come with an implicit attachment to 2. This is clearly the case when Jorgensen (1997) likens the nature of European foreign policy cooperation to ‘a diplomatic republic’. No doubt, psychological and cognitive factors also affect decisions and actions of responsible individuals. For example, President Bush, who was sure that Iraq possessed WMDs, acted differently than his predecessor so that the US invaded Iraq. However, psychological and cognitive factors can explain state actions only up to a certain point. That is to say, since one cannot reduce role-positions to individuals7, methodological

7 Role-positions or positioned-practice-places are ‘structural properties that persist irrespective of the agents that occupy them and as such cannot be reduced to the properties of agents l that occupy them, but these ‘positioned-
individualism is not suitable for explanation. For example, de Gaulle as president was able to veto twice the British entry into the EC in 1960s while Pompidou as president was able to accept it in 1973. Furthermore, the ‘transformed’ FPA regards states as real structures where various agents exist, interact, and compete/cooperate for having upper hand in state actions. These agents, too are but (groups of) individuals in role-positions within state. Allison’s book (1970) has been indeed very much elucidating concerning this competitive/conflictual aspect of state agency.

How about non-state actors? This is clearly a no less easy task. As Colas (2002: 7) asserts, ‘[o]ne important reason for the limited explanatory power of transnationalism is that it lacks any theory of agency’. I think, the ‘transformed’ FPA starts from these two same points in the conception of states for conception of non-state actors. Firstly, they are real entities with real powers. As Weenink (2001: 86) puts, ‘[t]he proper motivation for studying NGOs, or any other internationally-active organisation, is that they exist, and raise questions worth answering. We may try to assess their influence or success in particular instances, but even if the impact of NGOs was non-existent, this would not be an objection to studying them’. Secondly, the ‘transformed’ FPA regards non-state actors as structures where various agents exist, interact, and compete/cooperate for non-state action. These agents are, once again, but individuals in role-positions.

How to theorize structure? There are various inroads from the ‘transformed’ FPA into conceptualization of structure(s). Firstly, as Hill (2003: 26) asserts, ‘[s]tructures exist at all levels, from the family to the international system, and it is an error in foreign policy to suppose that ‘structure’ refers only to the external environment. The political, bureaucratic and social structures which condition foreign policy-making are of vital importance’. Knudsen (1994: 204) enlists these multiple contexts of state action in general, foreign policy decision-making in particular as follows: ‘an immediate institutional context for the individual decision-maker, a wider administrative (bureaucratic) context within the government for the decision-making institution, a broader domestic political environment for the government as actor, and an environment external to the state when conceived as actor’. Combining these two, the ‘transformed’ FPA inclined to think international system as ‘a structure of structures’. That is to say, a higher-level structure is composed of lower-level structures. For example, the EU sub-global/regional structure is one of those under the higher-level international structure while the EU sub-global/regional structure has its lower-level state structures. Archer (1995: 9, emphasis in original) refers here to ‘the stratified nature of social reality where different strata possess different emergent properties and powers’. The ‘transformed’ FPA is in line with realist social theory with its assumption that ‘the EU is more appropriately analysed as a non-unitary or disaggregated entity in world politics’ (White 2004b: 46) or that ‘European foreign policy as a whole is conceived as an interacting foreign policy system’ but these three types of policy [‘Community foreign policy’, ‘Union foreign policy’, ‘National (member state) foreign policy’] are regarded as the ‘sub-systems’ that constitute and possibly dominate it’ (White 2001: 24). One last point is about borders of these structures. Contrary to the common thinking in mainstream IR (e.g. inside-outside distinction), these structures are neither hierarchical nor fully isolated from others. Instead, they are interwoven circles. What is more, various sorts of agents are located in each. Since it is not possible to prevent these agents from communicating and interacting with others from different structures, the borders become fuzzier and fuzzier. Therefore, Sorensen (2001: 1) is right to point out that ‘[t]he insulation of ‘international’ from ‘domestic’ is wrong. International relations cannot be
interrogated in separation from domestic matters and vice-versa: no analysis of domestic affairs is adequate if the connections to international relations are left out’.

Secondly, these structures have two ontological characteristics: a) they are real entities in the causal sense b) they have different emergent powers and properties than their various agents (e.g. army is not plural of soldier). Therefore, one cannot reduce structural powers and properties neither to powers and properties of its agents nor to their interaction. These two go against the definition of structure in the structuration theory (Giddens 1984). The latter indeed tend to reduce not only real powers and properties of agents and structure but also their material resources, normative, legal, discursive framework to an ontology of praxis. Consequently, the claim that ‘[t]he structure itself exists in the minds of each of the actors as perceived patterns of prior behavior’ (Knudsen 1994: 210) would claim, for example, that acquis politique does not have a real existence. This is at odds with the (philosophical) realist definition of structure in the ‘transformed’ FPA (see Carlsnaes 1992; Archer 1995: ch. 4). (More on this below)

With regard to the second, the ‘transformed’ FPA has a discourse against methodological monism, that is, a sum of standard, explicit and unchanging criteria for how to do (social) science à la Vienna Circle. White (2001: 172) holds that ‘FPA does not need to be located within a traditional methodology’. Needless to say, traditional methodology here means positivistic methodological monism. Because methodological monism is unthinkable without empiricism, the latter is cursed, too. White (2004a: 25) asserts consequently that ‘there is no necessary connection between FPA and classical realism, or for that matter, between FPA and structuralist approaches based upon a rationalist epistemology’. In this way, the ‘transformed’ FPA breaks with positivist straitjacket. Now, a large free space opens up for all types of first-order studies, provided that they are not premised in positivistic methodological monism. In other words, despite the fact that White (2004a: 25) writes that ‘[i]n the absence of a consensus on theory, we might add, the attraction of a foreign policy system approach is twofold: it neither privileges a particular theoretical position, nor does it rule out alternative theoretical perspectives’, this prima facie plea for tolerance, however, does not include positivistic approaches. The reason is threefold. First, this is the only way that ‘European scholars, raised in rather different epistemological traditions, can take US theory without having to take US epistemology’ for the ‘transformed’ FPA perceives as threatening and intriguing the fact that ‘the bulk of the work emanating from the US FPA community is positivistic in a stark form’ (S. Smith 1994: 12-13). Second, positivist methodology is inescapably reductionist in the sense that it in any case dictates/would dictate to reduce the social ontology which the ‘transformed’ FPA presupposes to its actual and empirical lower levels. Third, positivism instinctively seeks to uncover one by one the deterministic laws of ‘social physics’ as Newton did in physics. It attempts to construct a grand theory that unites all these laws. The ‘transformed’ FPA still has a vivid memory of the catastrophic results of this Comtean dream: ‘The history of FPA as an academic subfield of international relations is one of rise and fall of general theory’ (S. Smith 1994: 14).

It seems that the ‘transformed’ FPA commits to a post-positivist epistemology. This brings about two consequences. Firstly, possibilities to build bridges with other positivistic approaches are now reduced, not increased. For example, the ‘transformed’ FPA can hardly reconcile with the position of moderate/conventional/soft constructivists (for example Katzenstein 1996; Ruggie 1998; Wendt 1999; Hopf 2002), for the latter believes firmly in acquiring knowledge of socially constructed (sic) world through a positivist epistemology. Of course, one can argue that softer forms of
Empiricism that replaced that old vulgar materialism of the early positivism are now much more adaptable to nature of social reality (Nicholson 1996). Yet, the dilemma that once haunted regime theorists (Kratochwil and Ruggie 1986: 764) is now debilitating for the moderate constructivism: its empiricism, whether vulgar or softer is in clash with its social ontology (S. Smith 2000; Friedrichs 2004: ch.6). This means that the supposedly strong eclecticism in the ‘transformed’ FPA that ‘FPA is a “broad church” and can contain positivist and “post-positivists” approaches’ (White 2001: 176, emphasis in original) cannot be easily realized.

A brief examination of neo-classical realism’s epistemological precepts also offers valuable insights about (in)feasibility of collaboration. For one thing, the form of empiricism which the neo-classical realists are attached to is ambivalent and not well framed. I think they are aware of the problems the above mentioned confrontation between a post-positivist/social ontology and a positivist/rational epistemology generates in their first-order studies that combine objective power relations with cognitive and psychological factors. Therefore, they are inclined to take a cautious stance against the limitations of ‘scientific method’. Interestingly, Schweller (2003: 347) writes that ‘I am concerned that too much fascination with the scientific foundations of IR theory may obscure this essential ingredient [bringing back in the warp and woof of domestic politics] from realist theory and, more generally, the study of political science. There is no logical reason for such a tradeoff. Nevertheless, it seems that, as the discipline becomes more self-conscious about its status as a science, it produces less interesting and more apolitical work’. Yet, it is hardly possible to call their epistemological commitments post-positivist. In my opinion, neo-classical realism is implicitly attached to a softer form of empiricism given that they find that ‘neither spare game-theoretic modeling nor pure "thick description" are good approaches to foreign policy analysis’ (Rose 1998: 166). What is more, they have to approach this issue pragmatically because of their hegemonic intentions in academia: ‘Just as important, neoclassical realism is essentially the only game in town for current and next generation of realists’ (Schweller 2003: 345-346). I strongly believe that neo-classical realism would not be the new orthodoxy in American IR, if it offered a firm post-positivist answer to epistemology.

Secondly, there is not a single and coherent post-positivism. The only common point for all forms of post-positivism, that is their opposition to/rejection of positivism, makes it but a strange animal (Vasquez 1995; S. Smith 1996). The starting point of post-positivist critique to positivism is the latter’s naïve belief in Humean terms that experience warrants epistemological certainty about social world. Instead, the post-positivists claim that all sense data are value- and theory-laden. Hence, epistemic relativism is inevitable. As Jorgensen (2004a: 35-36) puts it, ‘the conceptual lenses which observers apply have an impact on what can be observed and how it is observed. (...) When dealing with such as EFP, we are dealing with a set of social realities, meaning that observers may have an impact on that which is observed. (...) Concepts being used sometimes become conceptual blinders –perhaps because these concepts very accurately describe situations, developments or features of past practices rather than present. Hence, analysts employing them are

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8 The ontology of international regimes rests upon a core element of intersubjectivity. But the prevailing epistemological position in regime analysis typically is positivistic in orientation. Before it does anything else, positivism posits a clear separation of subject and object. It then focuses on the “objective” forces that move actors in their social interactions: regimes become external constraints on actors, not intersubjective frameworks of meaning. Intersubjective meaning, where it is considered at all, is inferred from behavior. Here, then, we have the most debilitating problem in regime analysis: epistemology contradicts ontology’ (Ruggie 1998: 95).
hindered in reaching accurate images of the present’. Consequently, qualitative methods and
discourse analysis within post-positivism that stress the central place of language in construction
of social world in general and EFP in particular given the fact that intersubjectivity involves high
levels of ongoing discourse(s). I am with post-positivists up to this point. However, problems
occur when post-positivists deduce from epistemic relativism (0) two other assumptions: 1)
judgmental relativism 2) ontological relativism. The move from 0 to 1 is obvious when ‘post-
positivists reject the view [that there are objective truths about the social world that can be
revealed by reference to the facts]’ (White 2001: 173). The move from 0 to 2 is clear when Larsen
(2004: 64, my emphasis) asserts that discourse analysis aims ‘to focus on the language used in
social life as a central and independent object of study. The background for that is the view that
there is no meaning residing outside language or that, even if there is meaning outside language,
there is no way of studying the meaning ‘behind’ language. No investigation can therefore take
place directly at the level of ideas.  

We are always, strictly speaking, studying the dynamics of language’. Bhaskar (1986: 6) rightly calls the second move an ‘epistemic fallacy’ for it reduces
object of knowledge (intransitive dimension) to knowledge of object (transitive dimension).

The dilemma is that post-positivists also desire to have judgmental rationalism. As White (2001:
178, my emphasis) writes, ‘[f]rom this [post-positivist/reflectivist] perspective, hypotheses might
be developed that test the importance of language and discourse in the European foreign policy
process, specifically with respect to the forms in which ideas are communicated’. In the same vein,
Tonra and Christiansen (2004b: 8) put forward ‘our contention that the European Union’s foreign
policy is an ideal empirical testing ground for what might be called a hard-core cognitivist or
constructivist approach’. Jorgensen (2004b: 13) backs the same view that ‘Europe’s foreign policy
appears to be an ideal case for showing potential and limits of social constructivism’. However,
judgmental rationalism is not possible without ontological realism9 (Bhaskar 1986; Potamaki and
Wight 2000). In other words, anti-essentialist tendencies in post-positivism have now to come to
terms with ‘moderate and non-deterministic essentialism’ (Sayer 2000: ch.4). Waever (2004: 199,
my emphasis) does exactly this: ‘Discourse analysis does not claim that discourse is all there is to
the world, only that since discourse is the layer of reality where meaning is produced and
distributed, it seems promising for an analysis to focus on it. Discourse does not stand apart from
“reality”. On the one hand, it is hard to conceive of any meaningful concept of a reality of which
we can talk when excluding discourse and thereby meaning. On the other hand, where would
discourse exist if not embedded in reality in the sense that actions, materiality, and institutions?’
This softer form of post-positivism is of course much more different than other radical forms of
post-positivism. Discursive aspects of social interaction become only one part of social reality. The
emergent properties and powers of human agency that are responsible for the unfolding of this
social reality are not dispersed with. Hence, the former form cannot reconcile with the latter.

So, to what kind of post-positivism is the ‘transformed’ FPA attached? I think, to a form of post-
positivism that originates from and is respectful to (philosophical) realist assumptions in the agent-
structure discussion above. If I am right, then not all sorts of theoretical/empirical contributions are
welcome. As Archer (1995: 17, emphasis in original) makes it clear, ‘the social ontology endorsed
does play a powerful regulatory role vis-à-vis the explanatory methodology for the basic reason

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9 Ontological realism only claims that objects of knowledge exist independently of researcher’s conception of them. It
is not through metatheoretical fiat, however, to reveal once and for all the powers and properties of objects of
knowledge. This is the job of first-order studies. Consequently, on the one hand, ontological realism guides these
studies, on the other hand, it adjusts itself in line with findings of the latter.
that it conceptualizes the social reality in certain terms, thus identifying what there is to be explained and also ruling out explanations in terms of entities and properties which are deemed non-existent’. Then, as Hill (2003: 9-10) asserts, ‘there are limits to eclecticism’. What if I am wrong? Well, I cannot be given that nobody can, in fact, in the wonderland of radical post-positivism where ontological and judgmental relativism prevails.

On genealogy and metatheory of the ‘new generation’ ES

It is commonplace to argue that the ES is one of those alternative ways of thinking to the ‘rationalist’ and ‘scientific’ study of international relations (Little 2000; Jackson 2000; Jackson and Sorensen 2003: ch.5). These two indicate acceptance of two metatheoretical positions in the ES thinking from the very beginning. Anti-rationalist means a social understanding of international relations in ontological terms while anti-scientific refers to firm opposition to positivist epistemology and methods.

Social constructivist scholars have already acknowledged that the ES pioneered social constructivism with its international society concept (Jepperson et al. 1996: 45; Ruggie 1998: 862; Wendt 1999: 31; Adler 2002: 100). This is true. The ES, like realisms, starts from the description of international system as international anarchy which means ‘a multiplicity of powers without a government’ (M. Wight 1978:101). However, the ES, unlike realisms, identifies a societal and normative dimension in international relations next to the materialistic features of the conflictual international system: ‘There is cooperation in international affairs as well as conflict; there are a diplomatic system and international law and international institutions which complicate or modify the workings of power politics’ (M. Wight 1978:105, my emphasis). Following his mentor’s view, Bull (1977:39) contends that ‘the element of a society has always been present, and remains present, in the modern international system, although only as one of elements in it, whose survival is sometimes precarious’. In this way, the ES makes a clear distinction between the anarchic international system and the historically evolving international society. The international system is the physical circumstances where sovereign states find themselves at first whereas the international society is the normative framework where sovereign states collaborate to better those once ‘primitive’ circumstances. The classical definition by Bull and Watson (1984: 1) of international society as ‘a group of states (or, more generally, a group of independent political communities) which not merely form a system, in the sense that the behaviour of each is a necessary factor in the calculations of the others, but also have established by dialogue and consent common rules and institutions for the conduct of their relations, and recognise their common interest in maintaining these arrangements’ comes from this physical-social/normative dichotomy.

But, is such a dichotomy sustainable? On the one hand, the classical ES scholars respond affirmatively (M. Wight 1978, 1991; Bull 1977; Bull and Watson 1984). Therefore, they conceptualize international relations both in mechanistic terms and in social/normative terms. Their understanding and conceptualization of states shifts between states-as-Hobbesian-asocial-creatures and states-as-agents. No doubt, here is an ambiguity to be clarified. Ruggie (1998: 862) is right in his criticism that the ES aims more ‘to resist the influence of American social scientific modes of analysis and less to firm up its own theoretical basis’. Fortunately, ‘the new generation who continue to identity consciously with the classical English school canon are more open than their predecessors to influences from philosophy, social theory and world history’ (Dunne 2001a: 223-224). I think that the classical ES scholars didn’t have sufficient knowledge of philosophy and social theory. Moreover, their experiencing Cold War as harsh power politics made it difficult for
the founding fathers to come up with a definition of international system that solely focuses on social/normative dimension. Instead, they opted for and benefited from this dichotomy, \(^{10}\) even though they constantly focused on societal, normative, legal, discursive, cognitive nature of interstate relations. On the other hand, the ‘new generation’ ES rejects this dichotomy. For ‘international relations is always and entirely a form of human relations; foreign policy is a human activity’ (Jackson 2000: 31), international relations is inherently and inevitably social and normative. Buzan (2004:100) writes that ‘all human interaction is in some sense social and rule-bound, then what results is not a distinction between international systems and international societies, but a spectrum of international societies ranging from weak, or thin or poorly developed, or conflictual, to strong, or thick, or well developed or cooperative’. This move locates all interstate relations ‘within (at least one) international society’ (Dunne 2001b: 70).

Two intertwined questions follow: a) what is the nature and modus operandi of international society? b) how to study international society? The first question is about ontological status of international society. One must make a distinction between philosophical and scientific ontology at this point. Scientific ontology focuses on one exclusive form of international society within its own context in order to reveal what kind of values/norms it consists and how these are created, developed, and abandoned (Dunne 2001b; Buzan 2004: 190-195). First-order studies of the ES energetically carry this task. Therefore, ‘the main thrust of the English school’s work has been to uncover the nature and function of international societies, and to trace their history and development’ (Buzan 2004: 8). I will leave aside scientific ontology here. Philosophical ontology turns to more abstract and less context-dependent features common to all types of international society. Are they real entities with real powers, or just a normative goal and/or heuristically useful for mental constructions? What is the logic behind their workings? Within the classical ES two figures led the main discussion at this conjunction. On the one hand, as a starter, Manning (1962) holds that the international society is not a hard empirical datum. He (1962: 5) asserts that ‘the world of diplomatics is not itself a matter of fact. Like fairyland, it is a mental construct. And what takes place within it does so not in fact but in idea’. This is prima facie a full-fledged (philosophical) idealist position. I think that Manning wrote purposively in this way to underline the mostly non-empirical nature of ‘social cosmos’. To be sure, far from being an idealist, he comes up with the obviously (philosophical) realist precept that ‘what most commonly counts in the social universe is not simply whether something has existence in fact, but whether it has existence in effect’ (Manning 1962: 16). On the other hand, Bull (1977; see also Bull and Watson 1984) goes further by arguing that international society is not only real but also evolving through state practice. As he (1977: 9, my emphasis) puts it in his frequently cited definition, ‘international society exists when a group of states, conscious of certain common interests and common values, form a society in the sense that they conceive themselves to be bound by a common set of rules in their relations with one another, and share in the working of common institutions’. The ‘new generation’ of the ES scholars follows and develops Manning and Bull’s openings. Dunne (2001b: 89) asserts that for the ES, ‘international society exists as a social fact. Like all social structures it is unobservable but its effects are real’. Concerning the functional logic of international society, Buzan (2004: 8) is in the view that ‘just as human beings as individuals live in societies which they both shape and are shaped by, so also states live in international society which they shape and are

\(^{10}\) Part of the reason why he Bull was so determined to distinguish system and society was no doubt driven by his desire to demonstrate that his ontology differed significantly from the behavioralists such as Morton Kaplan’ (Dunne 2001a: 227).
shaped by’. In the same vein, Dunne (2001b: 77) makes it clear that ‘international society is a socially constructed reality that generates obligations on the part of its members’.

In this sense, international society is an example of emergent social structures in the realist social theory. Emergent social structures have emergent properties ‘that are not manifest in any of its constituent parts, properties that arise by virtue of the relation between or interaction among the parts’ (Sibeon 2004: 76). Emergent social structures also influence interaction between its parts. As Archer (1995: 167, emphasis in original) asserts, ‘although it is contingent that any particular social structure exists (for they are historically specific and only relatively enduring), nevertheless whilst they do persist, as the unintended consequences of previous social interaction, they exert systematic causal effects on subsequent action’. Combining these two the realist social theory claims, therefore, that emergent social structures have emergent powers and properties that are ontologically distinct from and irreducible to those of its constitutive parts and their interaction. One must be careful not to reify social structures. Emergent properties are relational (Archer 1995:9), that is arising out of interaction between parts. Since constitutive parts also possess powers and properties, they are able to reproduce and transform social structures.

Realist social theory produces the basic morphogenetic approach out of these three. The approach is composed of three phases: 1) structural conditioning, 2) social interaction, 3) structural elaboration (morphogenesis)/structural reproduction (morphostasis) (Archer 1995: 157 or see the annex). 1 contends that a structure is a sine qua non for any social interaction. In the words of Bhaskar (1989), agents are, simply put, ‘born into a structure’. In the same vein, Archer (1995: 15) writes that ‘structure predates social interaction’. In the ES thinking, this phase corresponds to primitive conditions where states find themselves. The classical ES call this international system, whereas for the new generation ES, it is early stage(s) of international society. Realist social theory defines structure as past (inter)actions of agency that have causal powers on future (inter)action of agency. According to Archer (1995: 90), in 1 ‘systemic properties are viewed as the emergent or aggregate consequences of past actions. (…) Thus we accept that the results of past actions have effects in their own rights later on, as constraining or facilitating influences upon actors, which are not attributable or reducible to the practices of other agents’.

2 is subsequent part during which agents interact through various channels in various sectors/domains for various aims. Their interaction is a mixture of norm- and rule following, strategic and rationalist expectations, cognitive and psychological elements. As Archer (1995: 90-91) puts it, 2 ‘is seen as being structurally conditioned but never structurally determined (since agents possess their own irreducible emergent powers). (…) On the one hand, since conditioning is not determinism, the middle element of the cycle also recognizes the promotive creativity of interest groups and incorporates their capacity for innovative responses in the face of contextual constraints. Equally, it accommodates the possibility reflective self-sacrifice of inherited vested interests on the part of individuals and groups’. In the ES thinking, 2 is when states interact, that is embodiment of primary institutions of their international society.

3 is last period when all ‘previous’ relationship between agents in ‘previous’ structure results in a certain way. Archer (1995: 91) asserts that 3 ‘is interpreted as being a largely unintended consequence. The modification of previous structural properties and the introduction of new ones is the combined product of the different outcomes pursued simultaneously by various social groups. The unintended element largely results from group conflict and concession which together
mean that the consequential elaboration is often what no-one sought or wanted’. Here interaction is objectified as reconstruction of structure. As Bhaskar (1989: 33-34, emphasis in original) writes about any social structure that ‘it is no longer true to say that agents create it. Rather one must say: they reproduce or transform it’. The classical ES understands this phase as passage/move from international system into international society. The ‘new generation’ ES defines this as refinement of international society by its members through praxis. Bull (1977:9-13) asserts that what is certain is existence of international system that predates international society. What is contingent is emergence of (a certain form of) international society out of this within margins of time- and space-specific conditions. Therefore, there are two options for further development of international society: morphogenesis and morphostasis. While the former refers to ‘those processes which tend to elaborate or change a system’s given form, state or structure’, the latter means ‘those process in complex system-environmental exchanges which tend to preserve or maintain a system’s given form, organisation or state’ (Archer 1995: 166).

Needless to say, these phases are continuous. The morphogenetic cycle goes from 3 to 1 where now ‘the elaborated structure constitutes a new conditional influence upon subsequent interaction’ (Archer 1995: 91). Given their changeable natures, all international societies, then, are premised in a transformational social ontology. In this sense, when a researcher investigates how an international society evolves during its life time she actually reveals details of consequent phases. In other words, she traces and explains historicity of emergence in a given international society through analytical dualism (Archer 1995: 66ff).

The answer of the ‘new generation’ ES to the second question, originating from its (philosophical) realist ontological commitments, invalidates both methodological individualism and structural holism. The ES rejects the former, because reduction of international society to sum of its components destroys the very idea of international society as ontologically distinct (Buzan 2004: 117-118). Although opting for a historical social structural approach to world politics, the ES successfully avoids from teleological and deterministic interpretation of international society. For, as Buzan (2004: 95, reference omitted) writes, ‘[u]nlike neorealism, which largely confines itself to the international system pillar, takes an essentialist view of sovereignty and makes system structure dominant over the units, English school theory is much more inside-out, than outside in. International society is constructed by the units, and particularly by the dominant units, in the system, and consequently reflects their domestic character’. That is to say, the ES rejects structural holism.

The ES cannot work with the analytical duality in the structuration theory (Giddens 1984). It does not fit social realist ontology in international society for five main reasons (Archer 1995: ch.4; see also C. Wight 1999). First, structuration theory reduces everything to an ontology of praxis in the present tense. Second, it claims that neither agents nor structure can be analytically and methodologically separable. Hence, this ignores, let alone seeks to study their interplay, ontologically distinct characteristics of agents and structure. Third, it ignores the structural constraints (agential interaction in the past tense) that predate intersubjective interaction. Material resources and psychological elements in minds of agents get lost. Fourth, it cannot account emergence and causal influence of institutional, normative, legal, discursive factors that outdate social interaction. Fifth, it is inevitably agnostic about whether structure that outdates interaction will be transformed or reproduced.
Before going into further details of transformational social ontology of the ES works, I would like to investigate two things: whether the ES builds on 1) a unitary state assumption 2) a state-centric social constructivism in Wendtian sense. Otherwise, one can easily interpret all those above as if it does so. Concerning the first, one can argue that the classical ES perceived states as unitary, for their great interests in moral constraints and normative aspects of foreign policy making by state leaders blinded them to the ongoing bureaucratic and organizational power politics within state mechanisms (Sorensen 2001: 8). However, here two metatheoretical points are decisive. On the one hand, the ES claims that states exist as corporate actors and in other words, have real properties and powers. Bull (1977: 8; Dunne 2001b: 175) writes that ‘[t]he starting point of international relations is the existence of states, or independent political communities each of which possesses a government and asserts sovereignty in relation to a particular portion of the earth’s surface and a particular segment of human population. (…) The sovereignty of states, both internal and external, may be said to exist both at a normative level and at a factual level’. On the other hand, the ES demands that states not be reified, for it is only through human agency that states interact. As R. Jackson (2000: 32) puts it, ‘[s]tates are not things or objects or entities in themselves. States cannot speak or listen or therefore communicate on their own. They cannot act on their own. They cannot exist on their own. States are political associations that are constituted and sustained by people in every respect’. No doubt, human agency is –as in elsewhere- structured within state mechanism. Hence, Manning (1962: 6) writes that ‘[t]here are roles, and roles. When President de Gaulle faces an illustrious company in Westminster Hall, he speaks not merely as the spokesman, but as the symbol, almost indeed the living embodiment, of France. Not merely does he speak as in the name of France. France herself, he at least would seem to believe, is speaking through him’. In this way, it is accepted that individuals from different levels within a state always compete with each other to have the last saying in state actions. The classical ES, indeed, tend to ignore this competitive/conflictual nature of foreign policy making and take structured interaction as problem-free. A reason for this might be that state-society separation, civil society and bureaucratic politics are relatively new developments, their significant consequences of which the ES scholars did not have time to experience. In any case, the ‘new generation’ of ES scholars are equipped now with conceptual tools to grasp domestic aspects of foreign policy making, for they have already underlined the role of human agency in state actions.

One important and inevitable result of this sort of conceptualization of state is to become able to explain the transformation of state. Indeed, the models that assume states as unitary cannot accommodate with the powers and properties of those agents within state structure. However, those approaches that recognize structured human agency within state as real and powerful enough to interact and compete can also hold that state as a structure can be reproduced and transformed by human agency. Changing nature of state structure is an example of the double morphogenesis. Both states and their social structure change. As Archer (1995: 74) asserts, ‘at the end of a transformational sequence, not only is structure transformed, but so is agency as part and parcel of the same process. As it re-shapes structure, agency is ineluctably reshaping itself, in terms of organization, combination and articulation, in terms of its powers and these in relation to other agents’.

Contrary to the first impressions, the ES cannot be a state-centric social constructivist approach to world politics for two main reasons. First, the research interest of the ES members, unlike the mainstream IR, embraces much broader time scale than only four century long Westphalian states-system (Butterfield and Wight 1966; M. Wight 1977; Watson 1992; Buzan and Little 2000).
Because of this, Butterfield and Wight (1966: 12) declare that the ES is ‘more concerned with the historical than the contemporary’. Therefore, as Dunne (2001a: 227, reference omitted) puts it, ‘[i]t is time that the English School jettisoned the ontological primacy is attaches to the state. International society existed before sovereign states and it will outlive sovereign states’. Second, the ES members always underscore the existence and role of another element in the international system. Almost at the same time as Keohane and Nye, Bull was asserting that ‘there is now a global political system of which the ‘international system’ or states-system is only part of (even if it is the most important part), and that many of the issues that arise within this global political system (…) cannot be satisfactorily dealt with in a framework that confines our attention to the relations of sovereign states. To deal with them properly we need to consider, alongside states, not only organizations of states global and regional, but international non-governmental organizations, transnational and subnational groups, individual human beings’ (Bull 2000[1972]: 252). The ‘new generation’ of the ES fully agrees: ‘It is important to note that the praxeological element of the English School agenda is not limited to the inter-state realm. In our globalised world, a whole range of non-state actors in part constitute and are constituted by the rules and institutions of international society’ (Dunne 2001a: 225). That is to say, an important factor has also undeniable impact on the nature and modus operandi of international society. This is world society. Bull (1977: 269) writes that ‘[b]y world society, we understand not merely a degree of interaction linking all parts of the human community to one another, but a sense of common interest and common values, on the basis of which common rules and institutes may be built. The concept of a world society, in this sense, stand to the totality of global social interaction as our concept of international society stands to the concept of international system’.

For one thing, as Buzan (2004: 11) puts, world society is ‘the Cinderella concept of the English school theory, receiving relatively little attention and almost no conceptual development’. For it has been long-neglected and undertheorized element in the whole ES thinking. Furthermore, the classical ES assumed it as loaded with revolutionary dynamics against interstate order since it refers to interaction of whole humanity in a borderless world (M. Wight 1991; Vincent 1986; R. Jackson 2000; Wheeler 2000). This sort of usage is replete with problems: for, inter alia, it includes everything, it explains nothing.

In the lexicon of the ‘new generation’ ES, however, it refers merely to non-state actors, that is, all forms of transnational actors in world politics plus individuals (Buzan 2004: ch. 4). Buzan (2004: 118-128) is careful not to lump these two ontologically distinct entities together. Obviously, transnational actors, unlike individuals, are but corporate actors. In this sense, they share the same structural features as states. In other words, one can perceive them as structures where various individuals in role positions interact, compete and cooperate. Out of and in addition to these transnational actors, ordinary individuals located within other structures are in continuous interplay not only with corporate actors, but also with international society. In this way, the ‘new generation’ ES assumes that two more actors also take place within double morphogenetic cycles framework of international society and states. Buzan (2004: 200-201) makes this point as follows: ‘What is interesting analytically are the constraints and opportunities that developments in any one of these domains pose for the other two…. The units in each domain have to operate in the conditions created by the units in the other two domains, but the units in each domain can, up to a point, and given time, also shape the nature of the other two domains. This is a highly dynamic

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11 Whether they are able to gain this ontological status through legal, moral, normative, structural instruments in each specific international/regional system is a question that is/has to be answered only by first studies.
universe in which agents and structure are engaged in a continuous game of mutual tensions and mutual constitutions’. [to be continued]

Post-positivist scholars have already acknowledged that the ES (or Bull as the leading member of the ES in metatheoretical issues) pioneered the firm opposition to the positivist epistemology and methods (S. Smith 1996: 33; Waever 1998: 83; Puchala 2003: 18,30; C. Wight 2002: 30). This is true. The classical ES, like classical realism, was quick to anticipate and capture the scientific and hegemonic discourse of the behaviouralist revolution taking place in social sciences. It, unlike classical realism, reacted furiously, not capitulated, against grave repercussions of importing natural science techniques into IR without much reflection. The danger was that scientism would have impoverished the inevitably social and normative nature of international relations. Bull (1969: 20) underlines this by writing that ‘if we confine ourselves to strict standards of verification and proof there is very little of significance that can be said about international relations’. That is to say, the ES was prioritizing and seeking ways to protect the rich social ontology the ES works assumed and were premised in, in a time when vulgar materialism was unforgivably plundering it. Originated from this worry, the ES developed a methodological principle. There is no one single and strict method to study the various aspects/components of the social ontology. This is known as methodological pluralism in the ES literature. Alas, the ES warnings against methodological monism fell into deaf ears and scientistic barbarism of behavioralist IR overran the fertile lands of social ontology. Regrettably but unsurprisingly, IR has not yet recovered.

What is more tragic than marginalization of the ontological position of the ES was that the behavioralist prophets not only judged but also condemned Bull’s (the ES’s) classical approach as ‘unscientific’ (Singer 1969; Kaplan 1969). At this point, a misleading deduction that many scholars in IR even today accepts as natural did come into existence: conflation of the positivist with the scientific. The behavioralist discourse that positivism is the only way to do science in IR has been unbelievably successful to prevail so that many in IR instinctively use these two adjectives interchangeably (see for example Keohane 1988; Jepperson et al. 1996; Katzenstein et al. 1998; cf. Wendt 1999: 39). Moreover, it is possible to blame the classical ES for not doing enough on its part to counter this conflation. Butterfield and Wight (1966: 12) declare paradoxically that the ES is ‘more concerned with the normative than the scientific’. Once defined in these terms, the discussion can lead to the conclusion that the ES holds a position against social science in Habermasian sense. Dunne comes closer to this when he argues that the classical ES was ‘skeptical of the possibility of a scientific study of International Relations’ (1998: 7). Others share this preposition since they regard the hermeneutic methods employed by the ES as indicators of this skepticism (Epp 1998; R. Jackson 2000: ch. 3; Shapcott 2004).

This is simply a wrong turn, since the ES in no way loses its belief in science. Bull makes this clear when he (2000 [1972]: 255) writes that his article (1969) ‘was an attack not on science in international relations theory, but on scientism’. That is to say, the purposeful and well-grounded anti-positivism of the ES renounces only a version of social scientific study of international relations, not the whole ‘scientific enterprise’. Consequently, Bull’s unforgiven criticism to positivism never takes him to the wonderland of ontological and judgmental relativism. In other words, methodological pluralism comes to and acknowledges its limits. Bull (1969: 36, also 2000 [1972]: 256) asserts that judgmental rationalism is both possible and necessary: ‘The theory of international relations should undoubtedly attempt to be scientific in the sense of being a coherent, precise, and orderly body of knowledge, and in the sense of being consistent with the philosophical
foundations of modern science. Insofar as the scientific approach is a protest against slipshod thinking and dogmatism, or against a residual providentialism, there is everything to be said for it’. As mentioned before, judgmental rationalism is not possible in the absence of ontological realism. To be sure, Bull is also an ontological realist (cf. Alderson and Hurrell 2000: 45). He presupposes international relations as real, without forgetting to underscore its quality as ‘of changing before our eyes before our eyes and slipping between our fingers even as we try to categorize it’ (Bull 1969: 30).

Bull’s strong commitment to ontological realism gives birth to his distaste for some forms of post-positivism. As Hurrell (2002: xii) points out, ‘[a]lthough ideas and language matter, Bull’s philosophical realism distinguishes him from many of the more strongly reflectivist or discursive constructivists (and still more from post-modernism)’. Interestingly, Bull anticipated and wanted to move beyond the impasse between the positivists and reflectivists. He (2000 [1972]: 257) asserts with a great vision that ‘the impact of the ‘scientific’ movement on the study of international relations may be compared with that of the ‘linguistic’ movement on the study of philosophy. That movement, while it rocked philosophy in the English-speaking world for a decade or so, did not in the end convert philosophers to the view that the problems of philosophy, with which great minds had wrestled for thousand years, were simply trivial verbal puzzles and misunderstandings. But while philosophy has now returned to its traditional pursuits it will never be the same again’.

Because of Bull’s writings on the classical approach on the philosophical foundations of the ES, one can rightly argue that the ES is neither positivist nor reflectivist (R. Jackson 2000: 45-58; cf. Buzan 2004: 22-24). I will discuss here neither whether the ES opts for a ‘humanist science’ or some other sort of science nor which epistemology/methodology would be the right one for the ES. Rather, I simply claim that the classical ES (or at least Bull) privileges some methods instead of some others because of its/his ontological realist criterion. That is to say, for the classical ES ontology always comes first. Any epistemology or methodology that reduces its social ontology to the empirical/material domain or a discourse or normative theory would be definitely repulsed.

This rule remains valid for the most members of the ‘new generation’ ES. For example, R. Jackson (2000: ch. 3) constructs his argumentation on which methods are suitable in the study of international relations from one clear ontological assumption: ‘nature of international relations’. Buzan (2004: 230) reasons in the same way: ‘Any given international social structure will represent a complicated mixture of domains and levels, not to mention mixtures of coercion, calculation and belief, and much about its particular workings will depend crucially on how the mixture is composed. This opens the way to interpretive and comparative theory, but probably not to the hard cause-effect theory beloved of positivists’. The seminal book by Buzan and Little (2000) concentrates on dynamics of various international/regional systems in world history. Epistemological and methodological issues are only of secondary importance. Because of a worry that epistemology purposed by another scholar of the ‘new generation’ ES would be incompatible with ontological content of international society, Dunne (2001b: 17, note 18) asserts that ‘we differ in our treatment of a ‘critical’ account of international society: Waever is more sanguine than I am that post-structuralist insights can be incorporated’.

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12 No doubt, the philosophical foundations of the ES are not very well reflected on and formulated, for it was only Bull -in his personal capacity- who worked on these foundations systematically. Therefore, more thinking on these issues to settle down ambiguities is an overdue. I, too have a paper in progress concerning this.
Connecting these two

It is not unusual to meet stereotype accounts of the ES in both IR and FPA literature. They, by and large, tend to interpret the ES as a softer form of state-centric realism. In these accounts, the ES is blamed for being not only out of date, but also hampering context and time specific studies of highly complex international relations at various levels. For example, Jorgensen (2004a: 39) writes that the ES ‘like realism, is a general IR theory, having little interest in or awareness of ‘specificities’ in any particular part of the world’.

This paper originally attempts to demonstrate that the ES is, in fact, much more than a softer form of state-centric realism. Its transformational social ontology and flexibility in terms of methods guarantee that one could easily operationalize it in different case studies in order to obtain substantial knowledge about the nature and modus operandi of a specific international society in various parts of contemporary world. Although it is true that the classical ES has not paid sufficient attention to recent developments in Europe in the second half of twentieth century, there is no theoretical or methodological reason at all why the ‘new generation’ ES cannot turn its focus to this reality (Jorgensen 2004a: 39-40; cf. Buzan 2004: ch. 7). For example, one can define without much trouble European integration process or EFP or the evolution of EPC/CFSP framework as working of an international society and explain it within margins of the ES. Buzan does this exactly. He (1996: 263) asserts that the EU ‘represents a very fully developed international society, with large numbers of shared norms, rules and institutions coordinating, constraining and facilitating the relationships among its members’. Jorgensen himself acknowledges the necessity and fruitfulness of such a conceptualization somewhere else. He (2004b: 19, emphasis in original) writes that ‘in a sense, studies of the CFSP describe what happened to Europe’s international society after its expansion. (…) It seems to me that CFSP practices constitute a significant part of contemporary international society’. [to be continued]

Conclusion

In this paper, I attempted to show that the ‘transformed’ FPA and the ‘new generation’ ES have developed quite similar positions on two central metatheoretical issues. Firstly, they agree that continuous interplays between various actors from lower and higher strata generate different international outcomes. Secondly, they share the same plea for tolerance against choking impositions of positivistic IR. [to be continued]

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