

issues of justice and democratic change are still regarded as 'naturally' and/or 'logically' beyond the range of the possible for Australian realists.

Lamenting the uncritical nature of the mainstream IR community, in this regard, one of its disillusioned souls has pondered the part played by a broader social environment characterised by "conservatism, cynicism and pragmatism".<sup>34</sup> My own view is that the problem is a more precise one centred on the all encompassing preference regime which is the Westphalian model. On the other hand, it might be a trait integral to the English School per se, given John Vincent's proposition that realists in Britain generally have 'flattered Hobbes by imitating him' in their contemporary IR analysis.<sup>35</sup>

Whatever the reason, this tendency to flatter by imitation has, I suggest, been detrimental to Australian IR scholarship and to the process of foreign policy training and planning down the years. It is also detrimental to the memory of two fine scholars, in Wight and Bull, whose conservative erudition deserves more than reification and imitative flattery. Above all what their contributions deserves is an acknowledgement that imitation is not the sincerest form of flattery at all - but that criticism is. Or, more pertinently, as Terrence Ball once pointed out, to expose the contribution of scholars who have given us insight and understanding to serious and critical analysis is to pay it the highest compliment - the Socratic compliment.<sup>36</sup>

No such compliment has been paid to the major thinkers of the English School by their Australian imitators. Instead, any critical potential an International Society approach might have for Australian realists has floundered on the back of a shallow and static reading of its 'great texts'. The end result is an English School legacy centred on an objectified 'anarchy' premise, a commitment to systemic elitism and more latterly to the Western convergence theme. This legacy is most often articulated as a-society-of-states approach with rationalist overtones which (following Wight and Bull) places emphasis on the great powers and the rules and norms of traditional diplomatic procedures. It follows the lead of Wight and Bull also in framing its concerns about systemic change in orthodox Westphalian terms i.e. as only possible if it is in the interests of the great powers. John Fitzpatrick has had some interesting things to say on this issue in pointing to the dangers of an Australian IR perspective which simply follows the "restricted[Eurocentric] categories" of Wight and Bull, in

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<sup>34</sup>See M. Indyk, *The Australian Study of International Relations* op. cit. 1985: 300

<sup>35</sup>Cited in T. Dunne, "Realism" in J. Baylis and S. Smith eds. *The Globalization of World Politics* op. cit. p. 113

<sup>36</sup>See Ball's comments in *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1987) p. 4