

C. A. W. Manning and the study of International Relations

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Abstract. C. A. W. Manning, Professor of International Relations at the LSE (1930–1962), was a key contributor to the formation of the discipline in Britain. He wrote on Jurisprudence, which was his main strength; on the League of Nations, of which he was a keen supporter; on South Africa, concerning which he gained notoriety as the defender of Apartheid; on International Relations as an independent academic discipline, which, to him, was due to the *sui generis* character of international society as a formally anarchical but substantively orderly social environment. He was a Rationalist in Martin Wight's sense, and early constructivist, who saw that the society of states as a social construct was subject to interpretation, reinterpretation, and reshaping.

Charles Anthony Woodward Manning (1894–1978), MA, BCL, was born and educated in South Africa, and was a Rhodes Scholar at Brasenose College, Oxford. In 1922, he became a barrister, and until the following year served as Personal Assistant to the Secretary-General of the League of Nations. 'With a privileged, ringside, view' is how he later describes his post at Geneva, where, he says, he noticed 'the difference between the children of darkness and the children of light'.¹ His sympathies were with the latter. The next several years were spent back in Oxford—as Fellow of New College and Lecturer in Law, specializing in Jurisprudence. But, Manning reminisces, 'the yet sufficiently youthful law don volunteered to forgo his pleasant Oxford prospects'² to take up a London chair of International Relations—because, he says, the 'children of light' he saw in Geneva were often so poorly equipped for their understanding of things,³ a problem about which he now felt he ought to do something. For over thirty years, he was to teach at the London School of Economics, first as Cassel Professor of International Relations, and later as Montague Burton Professor. Interestingly, Philip Noel-Baker had been Manning's predecessor at Geneva; and now, for the second time, Manning became the successor to this the most illustrious of the 'children of light'.⁴

After his retirement in 1962, Manning continued at the LSE to give lectures on 'The Philosophical Aspects of International Relations'. Partly out of curiosity, for

* I am grateful to Tim Dunne, Alan James, Dan Keohane, Andrew Linklater, Debbie Lisle, David Long, Brian Porter, and Peter Wilson for their comments on the earlier drafts of this article, and want to thank Mick Cox for suggesting to me that I might write a retrospective on Manning. I am also indebted to Michael Donelan, who saw from the start that my category of 'institutionalism' was redundant.

¹ C. A. W. Manning, *The Nature of International Society*, reissue (London: Macmillan, for the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1975), p. ix.

² Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. xi.

³ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. x.

by then he was somewhat of a legendary figure among his former pupils, and partly out of genuine interest in his subject, I attended his lectures in the early 1970s—a few years before his eventual return, in serious ill health, to his native land. Manning, then around 80, was curiously childlike in his pedagogical egotism—after more than a decade of retirement, in addition to three decades of professorship, he was still worried about how many students would turn up at his first lecture every year! Not many, by then, but some of us who went along found him very engaging.

I once heard it said of Manning that he divided his daytime working hours into segments of three: a third was spent on studying philosophy, a third on reading the newspapers, and a third on teaching undergraduates. Learning, thinking, teaching dominated; writing, it appears, was done in spare moments. Over a long stretch of forty-five years, he published at the most about forty items. Only one of them is a full-length—and, I should add, highly idiosyncratic, and in parts rather hard to follow—monograph, and the rest includes a number of radio talks and short articles in relatively obscure places. It is no surprise, then, that although his former pupils remember him well, Manning hardly remains in the collective consciousness of the community of IR scholars and students—even within the UK. Those who know of him are likely also to know that he wrote a book called *The Nature of International Society*. But neither is the book nor its author familiar to the IR community at large in the way almost everyone there knows, or is supposed to know, about E. H. Carr and *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, or Hans Morgenthau and *Politics among Nations*—to name but two other founding members of the community.

Notwithstanding the attention frequently paid of late to the works of the so-called English School of International Relations, Manning is unlikely somehow to be resurrected from virtual oblivion because, remarkably to my mind, he is said, in some popularizing sources, rather categorically not even to belong to that School.⁵ And while ‘constructivism’ is now in vogue, virtually no one seems to notice or remember that the distinction between ‘institutional’ and ‘brute’ facts—from which that doctrine stems—was one of Manning’s most central and persistent messages;⁶ or that the international society of sovereign states subject to international law (and morality), to Manning, was a social construction *par excellence*.⁷

Still, Manning’s influence on the discipline of International Relations in its formative period in Britain is indubitable. This was due partly to his teaching and the intellectual influences he exerted upon his colleagues, and partly to the power he

⁵ See Chris Brown, *Understanding International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1997), p. 52; Tim Dunne, *Inventing International Society: A History of the English School* (London: Macmillan, in association with St Antony’s College, Oxford, 1998), p. 12; and Roger Epp, ‘The English School on the Frontiers of International Society: A Hermeneutic Recollection’, *Review of International Studies*, 24 (1998), pp. 47–63, at p. 48, note 7. If asked to choose between thinking of Manning as being inside or outside of the English School, my preference would be the former; but, as I shall explain later, my most preferred position is to abandon the talk of a school altogether.

⁶ Manning in effect made use of this distinction already in his ‘Austin To-day: Or “The Province of Jurisprudence” Re-examined’, in W. Ivor Jennings (ed.), *Modern Theories of Law* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 180–226, at p. 211. See also Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. xix. Constructivism runs through Manning’s works. See, for example, *Nature of International Society*, pp. xv–xvi, 2, 5–6, 27, ch. 3. On the construction of social reality, and the distinction between ‘brute’ and ‘institutional’ facts, see John R. Searle, *The Construction of Social Reality* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1995).

⁷ One clear exception to this general neglect is Timothy Dunne, ‘The Social Construction of International Society’, *European Journal of International Relations*, 1 (1995), pp. 367–89, at pp. 376–7, 384.

had in selecting the second generation of IR teachers in Britain.⁸ And, after all, he did write—over a very long period. In addition to a translation of a German textbook on International Law, *Völkerrecht im Grundriss* by Julius Hatschek, Manning wrote mainly on five interconnected subjects—Jurisprudence, the League of Nations, South Africa, the status of International Relations as an academic discipline, and the nature of international society which Manning took to be the discipline's central subject-matter, whose *sui generis* character justified for Manning the independent status of IR as a discipline.

Once I asked Manning how he came to translate Hatschek's book, which did not strike me as the most obvious thing to do, especially when, Manning said, he did not speak German. Apparently, it was at Hersch Lauterpacht's suggestion. Now that Britain had ratified the 'Optional' Clause of the Statute of the Permanent Court of International Justice, Lauterpacht thought it important for the British lawyers to know a little more about the Continental conceptions of international law. Manning shared the view,⁹ and got on with the work, he said, because he knew some Dutch! Decades later, when the British International Studies Association was being proposed, Manning apparently argued instead for a European association: he was adamant—as he was wont to be on many things he touched on in his lectures—that intellectual cooperation on matters international must transcend the parochial boundaries of Britain. Transcending academic boundaries was another thing Manning considered important. In his own case, it was insights from Jurisprudence and, more broadly, Analytical Philosophy that he wished to bring across to the formative discipline of International Relations.¹⁰ Below, I offer an intellectual portrait of this recently much neglected founder member of a discipline, and, to this end, outline and assess some of his more important publications.

Jurisprudence

This subject was one of Manning's main and long-lasting intellectual passions. But here he published little. There are, as far as I can find, only two items that fall under this category. One is the eighth (1930) edition of Sir John Salmond's *Jurisprudence*. The other is a lecture on John Austin, given at the LSE in 1932, which was published a year later in W. Ivor Jennings (ed.), *Modern Theories of Law*.

Salmond's *Jurisprudence* was a standard English-language work on legal theory, but Manning's eighth edition, and the book itself, have long been superseded. Manning was proud of his piece on Austin—a substantial essay, containing a sympathetic reading of Austin's legal theory. However, H. L. A. Hart, one of the most eminent figures on Jurisprudence in the English-speaking world in the latter part of the twentieth century, effectively dismissed Manning's essay as 'an unorthodox defence'.¹¹ Such opinions notwithstanding, Manning was to recall in his

⁸ Among Manning's colleagues, whom he appointed, and his former pupils are: Hedley Bull, Martin Wight, Geoffrey Goodwin, F. S. Northedge, Alan James, Jack Spence, Peter Lyon, Brian Porter, Michael Banks, Geoffrey Stern, John Garnett, and Robert Purnell.

⁹ Manning, *An Outline of International Law* (London: G. Bell, 1930), p. v.

¹⁰ Manning, *Nature of International Society*, pp. xii–xiii.

¹¹ John Austin, *The Province of Jurisprudence Determined* and *The Uses of the Study of Jurisprudence*, with an Introduction by H. L. A. Hart (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1954), p. xx.

lecture forty years later: ‘Nothing that I have read since then has caused me to modify the views I expressed on Austin, on law and on sovereignty, in 1932’.¹² Such was his intellectual confidence. He thought hard, but rarely changed his mind, it seems.

I for one find Manning’s rendition of Austin on law and sovereignty, though erudite, quite elusive at certain crucial points.¹³ I have, by contrast, found Manning’s own views on sovereignty and international law both quite simple and sound. As it happens, even though Manning published little on Jurisprudence proper, his works in other areas, and, in particular, his main writings on IR, are deeply rooted in his intellectual upbringing as a legal theorist. As he admits himself, his main contention about international law and society corresponds to what he read in Austin.¹⁴ And both *The Nature of International Society*, and Manning’s last major essay, ‘The Legal Framework in a World of Change’, published in *The Aberystwyth Papers*, centrally address the jurisprudential issues surrounding sovereignty and international law. I shall outline Manning’s views on these subjects when I visit his works on the nature of international society.

The League of Nations

Manning wrote considerably more on the League of Nations. Among his publications are: ‘The Proposed Amendments to the Covenant of the League of Nations’, a lawyerly piece, published in *The British Yearbook of International Law* (1930); *The Policies of the British Dominions in the League of Nations* (1932), published at the time of the Japanese invasion of Manchuria; ‘The Future of the Collective System’, a lecture he gave at the Geneva Institute of International Relations in August 1935, and presaging much of what Manning subsequently taught about the nature of international society; *Sanctions under the Covenant* (1936), the Sixth Montague Burton International Relations Lecture at Nottingham, delivered in the immediate aftermath of the German reoccupation of Rheinland; a conclusion to the volume, based on the special lectures delivered by a number of experts in 1937 at the LSE, which Manning edited under the title *Peaceful Change: An International Problem* (1937; reprinted 1972); and an essay entitled ‘The “Failure” of the League of Nations’, published in *Agenda* (1942; reprinted 1970), by which time all the great powers of the world were at war. From these several sources, the line Manning took on the League experience emerges.

¹² Manning, ‘The Legal Framework in a World of Change’, in Brian Porter (ed.), *The Aberystwyth Papers: International Politics 1919–1969* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 301–35, at p. 305.

¹³ On what Austin said about the legal nature of international law, Manning argued as follows: contrary to the widely spread impression that, according to Austin, international law was not ‘law properly so called’ but ‘positive morality’ only, Austin had in fact held (1) that international law was not ‘positive law’, but (2) that ‘positive morality’ was divisible into those items which could be treated as ‘law properly so called’ and those which could not, and (3) that international law was ‘law properly so called’. Manning was right with respect to (1) and (2); as to whether he was also right about (3), I hesitate to be categorical. See Austin, *The Providence of Jurisprudence Determined*, 2nd edn. (London: John Murray, 1861), pp. 121–8. This is the edition Manning used; the corresponding paragraphs are found in the Hart edition (cited in footnote 11 above) pp. 135–42.

¹⁴ Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. xxii.

Manning was a serious student of the League of Nations,¹⁵ counting himself as among those who had come to ‘set store by the *existing* League’.¹⁶ Accordingly, while he held that the Covenant could perhaps be improved upon in some respects,¹⁷ he was firmly opposed, for example, to those who advocated the compulsory solution of all international differences backed by collective coercive enforcement.¹⁸ Manning’s line in opposing the introduction of such a stringent principle was in substance that of ‘pluralism’, some thirty years later to be so named and articulated by Hedley Bull as against what he called ‘solidarism’.¹⁹ The following statement by Manning is worthy of note in this respect as it reveals him to have initiated a line of thought later more fully developed in Bull’s writings:

Given, then, a milieu where the units are persons only in idea, where the foundation of ordinary intercourse is the notion of sovereignty, and where law is not even superficially an instrument of social control, the problem of promoting collectivism must, I conceive, be one where analogies drawn from domestic experience may admit, at best, of only the most hesitant application.²⁰

But there was a difference between Manning and Bull. Whereas Bull was critical, rather too sweepingly in my view, of the entire twentieth-century trend towards what he called ‘solidarism’ in international law, of which he considered the League of Nations a key instance, Manning, by contrast, was a firm believer in the loose collective security system as envisaged in the League Covenant.²¹ Nevertheless, while seeing the League-type system ‘as in evolutionary line with the whole of human history’ and believing in its eventual triumph,²² his ‘forecast for tomorrow’ was bleak and, as it turned out, quite realistic: ‘In many quarters continued tension; in all directions fog; further outlook unsettled’.²³ Manning’s opposition to uncritical uses of the domestic analogy, noted above, and his relatively pessimistic assessment about what could be done to improve the world in the then prevailing circumstances, distinguish him from the Utopians of his time, such as Philip Noel-Baker and David Davies.²⁴ Still, Manning remained firm in his commitment to the principles of the League of Nations.

¹⁵ Manning, ‘The Proposed Amendments to the Covenant of the League of Nations’, *The British Yearbook of International Law*, 11 (1930), pp.158–171, at p. 158.

¹⁶ Manning, ‘Proposed Amendments’, p. 169; emphasis added. See also Manning, ‘The Future of the Collective System’, in Geneva Institute of International Relations, *Problems of Peace*, Tenth Series, *Anarchy or World Order* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1936), pp. 152–77, at p. 167.

¹⁷ See Manning, ‘Proposed Amendments’, p. 167.

¹⁸ Manning, ‘Proposed Amendments’, *passim*.

¹⁹ See Hedley Bull, ‘The Grotian Conception of International Society’, in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds.), *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Relations* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1966), pp. 51–73.

²⁰ Manning, ‘The Future of the Collective System’, p. 165. He went on to use the term ‘the domestic analogy’ on p. 174—to my knowledge the first occurrence, in the IR literature, of that term, which was later reintroduced by Hedley Bull in his ‘Society and Anarchy in International Relations’, in Butterfield and Wight (eds.), *Diplomatic Investigations*, pp. 35–50, at p. 35. See also ‘The Legal Framework in a World of Change’, p. 319.

²¹ See Manning, *Sanctions under the Covenant*, The Sixth Montague Burton International Relations Lecture (Nottingham: Nottingham Citizen Press, 1936); Manning, ‘The Future of the Collective System’, pp. 155–6, 174.

²² Manning, ‘The Future of the Collective System’, p. 156.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

²⁴ On Philip Noel-Baker, see Lorna Lloyd, ‘Philip Noel-Baker and Peace through Law’, in David Long and Peter Wilson (eds.), *Thinkers of the Twenty Years’ Crisis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 25–57; on David Davies, see B. E. Porter, ‘David Davies: a hunter after peace’, *Review of International Studies*, 15 (1989), pp. 27–36.

As I noted elsewhere, there were four kinds of response to the League of Nations' failure. According to a first position, the League, despite its inglorious history, embodied an essentially correct answer to the problem of world order; what was needed was a new, more supportive, attitude by the governments. A second saw the failure of the League as resulting not from its own structure but from the inherent instability of the international system as such. This position led typically to a federalist conclusion. A third view criticized the League for its dependence on outdated 'law and order' liberalism, arguing that the welfare of individual men and women living in separate states ought to be a key concern of the foreign policies of the powers and their institutionalized cooperation. This was one of the central contentions of *The Twenty Years' Crisis* by E. H. Carr. A fourth position saw in the League's inability to maintain world order the lack of wisdom on the part of those who, it claimed, overreacted to the experience of the First World War. According to this position, the pre-1914 system of international law, less stringent with respect to the legal control of the use of force by states, was more suitable to international society than was the League-type system based on the domestic analogy.²⁵

Manning, like many of his influential contemporaries, endorsed the first position,²⁶ although he also asserted that the League's failure had partly to do with the international environment in which it had to operate,²⁷ thereby acknowledging in part the validity of the second position. He also thought it unwise, given the apparent decline in the respect for law since the First World War, to incorporate in treaties provisions whose observance was politically unlikely,²⁸ and here his line was similar in form to the fourth position. What was conspicuously absent from Manning's reflection at this time was any hint that Wilsonian internationalism, by then subjected to a devastating critique by Carr, might have been a major source of the League's troubles. Unlike Carr, Manning showed no interest in welfare internationalism—his preoccupation was with the more traditional issue of the orderly (which, to Manning, roughly meant 'lawful') coexistence of sovereign states.

For Manning, what the League presupposed was 'a sane internationalism grounded in an accurate sense of the place of the given country as a unit in international society and an appreciation of just how much and how little the scheme of the new organisation required of the participating states'.²⁹ Without such an attitude and understanding, the British public and government failed to appreciate the responsibilities of Britain as one of the leading members of the 'collective security club for sovereign states',³⁰ and this applied to other democracies, including the United States which failed even to join.³¹ Hence, for Manning, educating the public about the rules of the game played out internationally and about the responsibilities of the members in the international club was a main role of those who took it upon themselves to teach International Relations.³²

²⁵ Hidemi Suganami, *The Domestic Analogy and World Order Proposals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), ch. 6.

²⁶ Manning, 'The "Failure" of the League of Nations', in Carol Ann Cosgrove and Kenneth J. Twitchett (eds.), *The New International Actors: The UN and the EEC* (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 117.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 117–18.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 108, 118ff.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 118.

South Africa

The League of Nations, then, was a ‘club’—the expression Manning also used in characterizing the entire society of sovereign states.³³ The Geneva club’s main aim was collective security, in which respect it failed. But Manning noted:

There may even be some who, pointing to the achievements of the League’s health organisation, or to the beneficence of the mandates system, if not to the fruitful service of the International Labour Office, might wish to deny that the League as such had really failed at all.³⁴

Manning’s reference here, in 1942, to ‘the beneficence of the mandates system’ is noteworthy. Thirty years later, in 1972, he was to write a complex legal article, criticizing as legally unsound, and politically motivated, the International Court of Justice’s 1971 Advisory Opinion which held that South Africa’s continued administration of South West Africa (Namibia) was unlawful. The article was a published version of the talk he gave at Aberystwyth, and was reproduced as South Africa Society Papers, no. 8.³⁵ By this time, Manning had gained notoriety as a defender of South Africa’s policies, and I learnt subsequently that he was known also to advance a moral, as distinct from a technically legal, defence of South Africa’s policies. But only recently did I discover that Manning had published in *Foreign Affairs* an article entitled ‘In Defense of Apartheid’.

Reading this was somewhat of a shock. It revealed Manning as someone whose mind was frozen about the time of the First World War.³⁶ Dividing humanity into the children of light and those of darkness was what his Geneva experience had taught or reinforced in him. But his mind was firmly set, it appears, on dividing the world also into the civilized club of Western nations and the uncivilized rest, the latter of which, in varying degrees, required the ‘protection’ offered by the former. This was the paternalistic assumption of the Mandates system, which at the time of its creation was seen by many League supporters as at once a civilizing process and a civilized alternative to the colonial rivalry and imperialist wars of the prewar days. But, it appears, Manning did not take seriously the changed moral climate of the rapidly decolonizing world.³⁷ To the extent that he did, he tended to be more dismayed by what he could only grasp as a third-world majoritarianism against the civilization of the West and its distinct voice of reason.³⁸

Underlying Manning’s argument about South Africa and Namibia was the notion of ‘collective selfhoods’ based on nationality and ethnicity. Because the national and ethnic groups in the region had their own unique identities, different cultures, and often conflicting aspirations, they, he believed, should be separated and treated differentially. Who had the right to decide on such matters was an issue that

³³ Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. 35.

³⁴ Manning, ‘The “Failure” of the League of Nations’, p. 107.

³⁵ *Political Justice at The Hague*, reproduced from *The Cambrian Law Review*, 3 (1972). Manning was chairman of the South Africa Society.

³⁶ See ‘In Defense of Apartheid’, *Foreign Affairs*, 43 (1964), pp. 135–49.

³⁷ See, for example, *Nature of International Society*, p. xx.

³⁸ The views attributed to Manning in this paragraph are based on my reading of his *Political Justice at the Hague; Collective Selfhoods, an element in the South West Africa case, being the testimony of an academic South African* (London: The South African Society, year of publication not stated); and ‘In Defense of Apartheid’. See also ‘The Legal Framework in a World of Change’, p. 314.

Manning, exasperatingly, appeared willing only to consider as a question of South African law.³⁹ Underlying this legalistic attitude was his firm belief that the non-whites in the region were then still too underdeveloped to participate in decision-making over such matters.⁴⁰ Manning rejected opposing views as doctrinaire and irresponsible.⁴¹

Manning, as noticed earlier, hardly ever changed his mind. And he lived long. By the time he began to write about South Africa, he was already in his 70s, by which age, it may not be unfair to say, even the best minds are liable to lose flexibility.⁴² This will not excuse him as it was as an active intellectual that he continued to present himself to the public—‘academic South African’ was his self-description at this time. But, then, his *Foreign Affairs* piece appeared only eight years after the Suez War of 1956, which had notoriously exposed the persistence of the colonial mentality in the British ruling elite. Eight years may not have been a very long time for an old man, from a privileged background incidentally, whose formative experience in any case was in the period before the Great War.

Besides, anxieties about the decline of the West in the face of the challenges from the Afro-Asian nations, as well as from the Communist world, were shared by certain other, younger, members of the British IR establishment. For example, Martin Wight, Manning’s LSE colleague, disliked what he called ‘Revolutionism’ as embodying anti-reason, and considered Afro-Asian anti-colonialism, together with Soviet Communism, as Revolutionism’s main contemporary manifestations.⁴³ Further, the concern about the future of world order being no longer based solely on the Western civilization was Hedley Bull’s main preoccupation, to which he dedicated the last years of his relatively short life.⁴⁴

This, of course, is not to deny the difference, at least in degree, between self-reflective scholarship, to which serious academics would claim to aspire, and prejudiced advocacy, in which they would profess not to engage—the difference which Manning had himself repeatedly stressed in his teaching.⁴⁵ Where on this spectrum any particular line of argument lay would be a matter of evaluative assessment which, in turn, cannot be entirely free of prejudices. Manning believed—implausibly to my mind—that his was closer to the one, intellectually worthy, end.⁴⁶

IR and international society

Manning’s most important contributions centred on two interrelated issues: the

³⁹ See Manning, *Collective Selfhoods*, especially, pp. 29–31.

⁴⁰ See Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. 99.

⁴¹ Manning, *Collective Selfhoods*, p. 23.

⁴² Manning had obtained from Oxford BA Greats (distinction) in 1920, BA Jurisprudence (1st class) in 1921, and BCL (1st class) in 1922.

⁴³ Martin Wight, *International Theory: The Three Traditions*, edited by Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter (Leicester: Leicester University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1992), pp. 88, 92.

⁴⁴ See Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), especially ch. 14; and Bull, *The Hagey Lectures: Justice and International Relations* (Waterloo, Canada: University of Waterloo, 1983).

⁴⁵ Manning, ‘International Relations: An Academic Discipline’, in Geoffrey L. Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1951), pp. 11–26, at pp. 21–2.

⁴⁶ Manning, *Collective Selfhoods*, pp. 21–5.

nature of International Relations as an academic discipline, and the nature of international society, which he took to be a unique subject-matter, necessitating the formation of a new subject. In this section, I examine Manning's thoughts on these themes in some detail.

It was Manning's article of faith 'that the better the world is understood by the better people in it, the better for the world will it be'.⁴⁷ The 'better people' here corresponded to what Manning elsewhere called 'the children of light'.⁴⁸ He was also particularly interested in educating the young—to turn them into adult citizens with a good grasp of the workings of international society.⁴⁹

Manning conceded that IR could be a branch of Sociology broadly conceived;⁵⁰ but because the sociologists of his time were unwilling to go beyond their traditional focus of enquiry to encompass the study of the international social complex, Manning felt it a matter of practical urgency that IR, with its focus on a distinct social milieu, should be studied separately.⁵¹ While believing IR to be an independent academic discipline, such that University undergraduates should be able to read for a degree in that subject, he also held that IR had its more traditional underpinners, such as History, Law and Politics.⁵² And the subject-matter of IR was so complex that, in his view, the discipline must necessarily involve the study of the subject-matter's various aspects—its geographical and social psychological aspects, for example.⁵³

Still, the study of IR must be directed towards the unified goal of making the international social complex better understood. According to Manning's own formulation, the discipline's objective was:

to meet the needs of a student who wants to achieve a progressively deeper insight into the nature of international relationships, those between peoples and states, and an ever improving aptitude for appreciating an international situation as it presents itself to the experienced statesman's eye. The purpose, in a word, is to support the student's efforts towards an understanding of life—as life goes on in the society of states.⁵⁴

Enhancing the understanding of life, as it goes on in the society of states, was what Manning dedicated much of his life to as a teacher of International Relations. As

⁴⁷ Manning, *The University Teaching of Social Sciences: International Relations* (Paris: UNESCO, 1954), p. 84; *Nature of International Society*, p. xvi.

⁴⁸ On this point, see Manning, 'International Relations: An Academic Discipline' in Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, p. 25.

⁴⁹ Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. 197.

⁵⁰ Manning, 'Report of the General Rapporteur', in Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, pp. 27–73, at p. 73; *Collective Selfhoods*, p. 5.

⁵¹ Manning, *The University Teaching of Social Sciences: International Relations*, pp. 46–7. Compare, however, Manning, 'Report of the General Rapporteur', in Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, pp. 27–73, at p. 53, where he says that IR 'is as much akin for me to History as it is to Sociology'. But Manning's point here was that IR in his view was to some extent 'an art'. See, further, *The University Teaching of International Relations*, pp. 48–9; *Nature of International Society*, p. 211.

⁵² Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, p. 18. Manning, *Nature of International Society*, p. 182.

⁵³ Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, p. 70; Manning, *The University Teaching of Social Sciences: International Relations*, p. 60. Manning's relative lack of interest in Economics is noteworthy; this, in my view, had to do with his conception of Economics as a positivistic social science, and his preference for a hermeneutical social science of international relations. See *Nature of International Society*, pp. 202, 204–6.

⁵⁴ Goodwin, (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, p. 14.

elsewhere, he taught more than he wrote, his major work on the subject, *The Nature of International Society* appearing only in 1962, the year of his retirement.

It is my belief that the relative prevalence, among the British academic specialists in International Relations, of the line of thought about international relations that Martin Wight called 'Rationalism', owes much to Manning's foundational effort—to draw attention to the uniqueness of international society as a formally anarchical but substantively orderly social environment.⁵⁵ The prevalence of this line of thought, and of a bundle of intellectual tendencies more or less cohesive with it, among those who were influenced in whatever manner by Manning's teaching—I thought at one time—might be expressed by the metaphor of the presence of a school with Manning as its founder.⁵⁶ As to how this 'school' should be named, my own preference had been the '(British) institutionalists'. I do not believe that the 'English School' has been a particularly helpful designation, although—with some unstated reluctance—I have myself used it until very recently. Ironically, too, this was the name given, in a not so illuminating piece, by Roy Jones who scathingly called for the School's closure.⁵⁷ I now feel, on reflection, that it would be better to do away with the notion of the school altogether in this connection—because, however unintentionally, it tends to give the impression that a clear boundary could, or should, be found between those who are in and those who are out.

I should explain myself a little further. Inasmuch as the 'members' of the 'school' 'founded' by Manning—if we were to talk in this way at all—inevitably came under the influence also of some other thinkers, and these other thinkers also influenced those outside of Manning's influence, it would be possible to speak of a number of 'schools', coexisting and partially overlapping with one another—'the E.H. Carr school', 'the Morgenthau school', and so on. This would make it pointless, I now think, to try to identify 'the school' in this region with any clear membership criteria. At best, what we have here is a cluster of thinkers with family resemblances, at least some of which are traceable to some common sources of influence. In the circumstances, I find it less troublesome to refrain from talk of a school, and to

⁵⁵ Manning's influence on Bull on this point seems clear. Bull acknowledges his special indebtedness to Manning in his *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1977), Preface. A conference paper I wrote, in which I pointed to Manning's influence on Bull, James and Northedge, had the following, amusing, response from Bull prior to the conference: 'Thank you for your paper about the British Orthodoxy and All That. I have a few small points of criticism but I shall save them up for the conference as it is important to smash this impudence with a sledgehammer before it gets off the ground and I shall need all the ammunition I can lay my hands on' (dated 27 October 1980). At the conference, he said that my paper was a 'decent' one, but pointed out as the paper's chief weakness its failure to discuss Martin Wight's contributions. However, Bull did not challenge my interpretation concerning Manning's influence on himself. It is noteworthy that, according to Bull's own assessment—and he knew Manning and Wight very closely—Wight's move away from Realism towards Rationalism was likely to have been due to Manning's influence, which, according to Bull, produced certain common elements in the outlook of all those who worked with him at the LSE at that time. See Bull, 'Martin Wight and the Theory of International Relations', in Wight, *International Theory*, pp. ix–xiii, at p. xv. For Wight's move towards Rationalism, see Wight, *International Theory*, p. 268. As for James and Northedge, they both broadly accepted my argument about Manning's influence on their conceptions of international relations. My paper later appeared as 'The Structure of Institutionalism: An Anatomy of British Mainstream International Relations', *International Relations*, 7 (1983), pp. 2363–2381. See also Alan James (ed.), *The Bases of International Order: Essays in Honour of C. A. W. Manning* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973).

⁵⁶ Suganami, 'The Structure of Institutionalism', p. 2363.

⁵⁷ Roy E. Jones, 'The English School of International Relations: A Case for Closure', *Review of International Studies*, 7 (1981), pp. 1–13.

think of Manning, and those either under his influence or with affinities with him in the relevant respect, as simply having articulated, in the course of the twentieth century, the ‘Rationalist’ line of thought about international relations, to which earlier thinkers can, retrospectively, be deemed to have made their distinctive contributions. If pressed, therefore, I would reply: ‘they are the “Rationalists”’, the label intended to refer to their particular type of thinking, and not to any necessarily self-conscious grouping.⁵⁸

Among the earlier thinkers, who cultivated the Rationalist line of thought, were Grotius and Vattel from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries respectively, and also certain legal writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁵⁹ Whether Manning was himself influenced by any of these earlier contributors is uncertain. There is some noteworthy correspondence, regarding the nature of international law and international society, between Manning’s views and some introductory remarks made by Julius Hatschek, whose work, we noted, Manning had translated.⁶⁰ Unlike Wight, however, there is no explicit attempt on Manning’s part to build his own theory of international relations by recourse to the classical literature. Manning always presented his picture of the world as something he himself saw, or understood to be, out there. Out there in the world, according to Manning, were states—personified entities—whose governments acted in their names, and carried on interacting with one another on the basis of a certain set of assumptions, a primary one of which was that they, the sovereign states, were members of an international society. Another important assumption was that the sovereign states were bound by international law, and international morality.⁶¹

Herein, incidentally, lies Manning’s simple solution to the often muddle-headed debate regarding the relationship between state sovereignty and international legal obligation. There is, according to Manning, no contradiction between them. It is a fundamental principle of international society, as it has historically evolved, that

⁵⁸ Wight’s three R’s are, of course, ‘patterns of thought’. See Brian Porter, ‘Patterns of Thought and Practice: Martin Wight’s “International Theory”’, in Michael Donelan (ed.), *The Reason of States: A Study in International Political Theory* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1978), ch. 3. Tim Dunne, in his *Inventing International Society*, is of course right to treat the British Committee on the Theory of International Relations, from which incidentally Manning was excluded, as a self-conscious grouping. But Dunne’s effective identification of this Committee with his ‘English School’, which, the title of his book implies, invented ‘international society’, helps those unfamiliar with Manning’s works further neglect the decisive role he played in establishing ‘international society’ as the central focus of the university teaching of International Relations in Britain. It may also be noted that even though Dunne thinks in terms of family resemblances when he talks of the English School, he is driven by the felt need to draw a clear demarcation line between those who are in and those who are out. For me, the usefulness of the concept of family resemblances is precisely that it allows us not to think in such rigid terms. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, translated by G. E. M. Anscombe (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968), sections 66–7.

⁵⁹ Among the legal writers I have in mind here is Lassa Oppenheim, for example, whom both Wight and Bull treat favourably. See Bull, ‘The Grotian Conception of International Society’; and Wight, ‘The Balance of Power’ in Butterfield and Wight (eds.), *Diplomatic Investigations*, ch. 7, especially p. 172. In my view, Bull’s contention that the balance of power is prior to international law stems from Oppenheim via Wight. See Bull, *The Anarchical Society*, ch. 5. Another legal writer worthy of note is Georg Jellinek, whose description of international society and international law was ‘anarchisch’. See his *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, 3rd edn. by W. Jellinek (Berlin: Springer, 1922), p.379.

⁶⁰ Manning, *An Outline of International Law*, pp. 3–11.

⁶¹ See Manning, *Nature of International Society*; ‘Legal Framework in a World of Change’, pp. 318–9. Manning’s reason for placing so much stress as he did on the notional and personified nature of the states was to ensure that we do not lose sight of our individual responsibilities regarding their conduct. See *Nature of International Society*, pp. 60, 64.

international law creates rights and duties for its member states; and though the states, which are members of international society, are called ‘sovereign’ states, the meaning of the word ‘sovereign’ in this particular context differs from that of the same word when used to refer to the ‘sovereign’ person(s) within the state; the term ‘sovereign states’ simply refers to their status as ‘constitutionally insular’, or ‘constitutionally independent’; in fact, it is only such entities that fully enjoy the rights and duties under international law; and all this is no more than a matter of conventional assumption—or what Manning called ‘socially prevalent social theory’ of international relations, which it was one of his elementary aims to expose.⁶²

It was the prevalence, as orthodox, of such a set of assumptions, that made it possible for states to interact with one another in a relatively orderly manner. However, the realm in which this set of assumptions prevailed—the society of states—was at the same time the realm which this very set of assumptions made possible. International society, to Manning, therefore was a socially constructed social reality. International society, as a social reality, provides a context in which particular states formulate and implement their foreign policies; hence Manning’s insistence that the study of the context is indispensable to the study of the interactions of the states.⁶³ But the context, in turn, is not a naturally given, but a socially constructed, environment, subject, therefore, to interpretation, reinterpretation, and reshaping. In a noteworthy passage, he remarked:

Omar Khayyam, when he sang of ‘this sorry scheme of things’, did not thereby imply that he would have been happier without one ... And we, too, like him, shall perceive that there already exists a scheme, a sorry one perhaps, but given, and a going concern ... Yet, while perceiving it as given, we should not mistake its genesis. This scheme was not the work of Nature ... It is artificial, man-developed—a ‘socio-fact’ in the jargon of some. What this generation can hope to affect is not so much the present inherited structure of the given scheme of things, man-created though it be; but, the manner in which the coming generation comes to read, re-interpret, and, in reinterpreting, to remould, the scheme.⁶⁴

Manning was appreciative of how little freedom governments enjoyed, or felt themselves to enjoy, in their mutual dealings,⁶⁵ but he never lost sight of the possibility that, despite serious constraints under which they operated, they might still find the way to act responsibly.⁶⁶ The main purpose of studying IR, for Manning, was to become what he called ‘a connoisseur’,⁶⁷ who, among other things, appreciated not only the constraints imposed by the context of international interactions, but the freedom which might be exploited to make the world even marginally a safer place to live in. It followed, for Manning, that ‘training the judgement by which you *criticize* men of action is the essence of a teaching of International Relations’.⁶⁸ Manning’s *International Relations* was aimed primarily at enhancing

⁶² Manning, *Nature of International Society*, pp. xxi–xxii, ch. 9; ‘Legal Framework’, pp. 305–10.

⁶³ Manning, *The University Teaching of Social Sciences: International Relations*, p. 67.

⁶⁴ Manning, *Nature of International Society*, pp. 8–9.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. xxxii.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 119–22.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xii. Manning said in one of his lectures that earlier he stressed the need for IR to aim to be a ‘science’, but that later he found the right word to describe what he thought the study of IR was all about—to develop ‘connoisseurship’. See Manning, ‘Out to Grass—and a Lingering Look Behind’, *International Relations*, 2 (1962), pp. 347–71, at pp. 360–1.

⁶⁸ Goodwin (ed.), *The University Teaching of International Relations*, p. 48.

our understanding of its subject-matter; but it also allowed for normative engagement.

What sort of normative engagement he would like to have seen develop in the study of International Relations is an intriguing question. On the one hand, it appears that Manning's own normative approach was similar to the line taken by H. L. A. Hart and developed further by Hedley Bull who in turn followed Hart.⁶⁹ Hart had argued that given some common human traits, goals and needs, and given also the environment in which human beings lived, there was a natural necessity for them to live under certain very basic legal principles.⁷⁰ Similarly, Manning spoke of 'a situationally generated pragmatic inevitability'⁷¹ as underlying the need for states to pay formal deference to the authority of international law. He took this need very seriously, the satisfaction of which he saw as the basis of international order.⁷² But, on the other hand, it would be a mistake to consider Manning simply as a utilitarian legalist. His position on how to approach a moral question appears to have been that since there are a number of starting points in this area all the doors ought to be kept open, and that students must be encouraged to engage in moral philosophical discussions in which, among other things, they must learn to treat the views of others with respect.⁷³

Something along the similar lines was also contained in Manning's suggestion for the immediate future of international relations.⁷⁴ In his view, enduring and reasonably enduring co-existence between states and peoples in their dealings with one another was something that we could now realistically hope for.⁷⁵ And this, he suggested, required 'a kind of formal correctitude, a degree of mutual self-restraint, a growth of gentle manners' as well as 'a measure of understanding, born of an appreciation of individuality, each seeing the other as significantly unique',⁷⁶ he, however, also stressed the importance of combining good neighbourliness with the caution born of hard experience.⁷⁷

Manning no doubt was thinking here that such mature relationships were only possible between relatively 'advanced' peoples. His own examples were the peoples of France and of Western Germany, of whom, however, he added that such relationships were a Utopian vision only a generation beforehand.⁷⁸ It is pertinent to note here that, in Manning's view, the emergence of the community of humankind—the true *Gemeinschaft* of all the human race⁷⁹—could not be ruled out in the long run. He even wrote that 'along with the diplomatic quasi-community of states there is emerging the true, social, community, the living world-tribe of human flesh and

⁶⁹ See H. L. A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961); compare Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society*. On Hart's influence on Bull, see Suganami, 'The Structure of Institutionalism', pp. 2374–5. For Manning's interest in Bentham and Austin, see Manning, 'Austin To-day'.

⁷⁰ Hart, *The Concept of Law*, ch. ix.

⁷¹ Manning, 'The Legal Framework', p. 328.

⁷² See Manning's discussion of the Goa incident in *Nature of International Society*, pp. xxvff.

⁷³ See Manning, *Nature of International Society*, ch. 10.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 10, 180.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 181.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xxxiii.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

blood'.⁸⁰ For the moment, however, a transnational community governed by supranational institutions was only emerging 'in the less than universal context of Western Europe'.⁸¹ Meanwhile, Manning believed, it is more realistic to consider international law at the universal level 'as law of a different species, than as merely a more primitive form of what is destined some day to have the nature of a universal system of non-primitive municipal law'.⁸²

Implicit in all this discussion is Manning's conception of how the world might be developing gradually—from a system of states whose formal and substantive characteristics are best comprehended by contrasting them to those of a well-governed domestic society, through a society of states, in which peoples begin to enjoy a greater degree of order based on mutual respect, to a community of mankind which might yet emerge (although Manning was himself sceptical of the scenario of the states withering away).⁸³ As to what forces propel or hinder this development, Manning did not say, although he did acknowledge the importance of studying 'social dynamics'⁸⁴—'the multi-dimensional interplay of social forces'.⁸⁵ But he left this for others to pursue. For him, the more elementary task was to understand the existing 'formal structure' of the world.

Manning in retrospect

I have not the slightest doubt that acquaintance with Manning's life and writings would be indispensable to any serious enquiry into the history of International Relations as an academic discipline. His influence appears to have been decisive in setting the initial course of the academic study of International Relations in Britain along predominantly Rationalist lines. Rationalism's dominance in Britain has meant that, unlike in the United States, Realism never gained a hegemonic status. It has also meant, however, the relative neglect, until recently, of the Revolutionist strands of enquiry into world politics. It is worth adding, too, that Manning's focus on the institutional bases of international order, and underlying this, his stress on the interpretive understanding of society, were consonant with, and may well have contributed to, the general rejection in Britain of behaviouralism in the study of international phenomena.⁸⁶ In the more recent context, Manning is also worth reading even simply to remind ourselves that constructivism is not a remarkably new doctrine in IR.⁸⁷ But there is a clear difference between acknowledging Manning's

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

⁸² Manning, 'Legal Framework', p. 319.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 310. We may recall here Manning's view, during the League of Nations days, that a League-type system was 'in evolutionary line with the whole of human history'.

⁸⁴ *Nature of International Society*, p. 201.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 65, 212–13.

⁸⁷ See, for example, John Gerard Ruggie, *Constructing World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization* (London: Routledge, 1998); Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Not surprisingly, the distinction between 'explanation' and 'understanding', popularized by Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, through their *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), was also already present in Manning, who, incidentally, was familiar with Dilthey's and Winch's ideas. See *Nature of International Society*, p. 25.

historical importance in the British study of International Relations and finding contemporary significance, at the start of the new century, in his ideas and arguments.

Thirty years ago, as a beginning student, I learnt much from reading parts of his *The Nature of International Society*. A few years later, as a beginning teacher, I benefited from reading his discussion on International Relations as an academic discipline. His smart treatment of sovereign statehood and international law, when read, will continue to have an impact. And his examination of the purposes for which, and the ways in which, university students may be taught about international relations deals systematically with such fundamental issues that it will continue to provide a useful starting point for any discussion on these matters. Still, I believe that, even though the first publication, in 1962, of *The Nature of International Society* was necessary and welcome, the book, when reissued in 1975, was bound soon to be overshadowed by certain other outstanding contributions.

Bull's *The Anarchical Society* came out in 1977, reconfirming the Rationalist orthodoxy in Britain. This was followed, in 1979, by Waltz's *Theory of International Politics*, which set out a new version of Realism based on the positivist interpretation of science. By 1983, Linklater's *Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations* was out, which explored a Revolutionist perspective, presaging the Critical Theoretical line he came to be identified with.⁸⁸ These were some of the greatest works from the late 70s and early 80s that have enriched our understanding of international society, its limitations, and its potentials. It seems clear to me that, as required reading for undergraduate students in International Relations, these books have superseded Manning's.

Besides, Manning's defence of South Africa under white rule is seriously disturbing. This should not, of course, prejudice our judgement of the quality of his works on other subjects, which often contain astute remarks. Still, there are some worrying linkages between his stance on South Africa and his views about international society more generally, both of which were highly legalistic, and sustained by his confidence in the essential decency of Western nations in their relationship with others.

This is not to say that Manning's analysis of the institutional structure of the world was seriously inadequate. On the contrary, this is, to my mind, a very important service he has performed for the IR community. His approach was followed through, in particular, by Bull's *The Anarchical Society* and even more closely by James's *Sovereign Statehood*.⁸⁹ It has been my view, however, that the 'formal structure' studies, pursued by Manning and others, have already done quite enough. Not much of further significance could be expected from this line of enquiry.⁹⁰ Even though every first-year student of International Relations should know about the formal structure of international society—and here Manning's pioneering endeavour should be praised—a further development of International Relations as a serious academic discipline would seem to me to require fuller

⁸⁸ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979); Linklater, *Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, for the London School of Economics and Political Science, 1982).

⁸⁹ See Alan James, *Sovereign Statehood: The Basis of International Society* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1986), inspired by Manning's 'Sovereignty for the Common Man' (unpublished).

⁹⁰ See Suganami, 'The Structure of Institutionalism', pp. 2378ff.

attention paid to what Manning himself had acknowledged to be complex and difficult—the ‘social dynamics’ of the world, ‘the multi-dimensional interplay of social forces’.

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