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Conclusion

Cricket
as explained to a foreign visitor

There are two sides
one out in the field and one in.
Each player that's in the side that's
in goes out and when he's out he
comes in and the next player
goes in until he's out

When they are all out the side
that's out comes in and the side that's
been in goes out and tries to get those coming in out

Sometimes you get players still in and not out.

When both side have been
in and out including the not outs
That's the end of the game
Howzat!¹

The aims of this book have been to subject the 'paradoxical beast' of English cricket to sustained examination, to chart how the role and social significance of cricket have changed as the game has globalized, and to take our understanding of the 'cricket-Englishness' couplet beyond the somewhat pleonastic treatment it receives in both the sports studies literature and analyses of Englishness and English national identity. At the outset it was established that cricket was somewhat peculiar amongst contemporary global sports. Subsequently we saw how cricket emerged as a modern sports form, socially and geographically diffused within Britain and across parts of the Empire, and continues to structure the lives and identities of various groups within Britain today. Can we identify how the development and structure of British society relates to the way in which the game is played? Can we now say *why* this peculiar sport remains the quintessential English game?

An obvious and simple answer to this question is that cricket is the quintessential English game because people think it is; because they associate playing the sport with this specific ethnic group. Consequently, when cricket is described in this way people identify a close interrelationship between what are perceived to be English national characteristics and those characteristics

attributed to the game and its players. Williams (1999: 1) for instance has noted that cricket has been ‘celebrated as a metaphor for England’ and inscribed with a peculiarly English moral worth. Indeed for cricket, and I would argue *only* for cricket, English national character traits such as independence, honesty, restraint, self-discipline and pragmatism are routinely and unproblematically defined as generated through, and embodied in those who play, the game. *Globalizing Cricket’s* broad historical sweep shows that pretensions to these attributes were just as conspicuous in the initial claims for cricket as England’s national game as they were in the key role attributed to the game in the latter years of the Empire. The Flintoff celebrity persona charted in Chapter 8 illustrates the contemporary manifestation of this enduring sense of the distinctive aspects of national life that both insiders and outsiders have described as characteristic of the English (Langford 2000). It is easily overlooked but the perception of cricket as a manly game is fundamental to sustaining the association between cricket and the equally gendered concept of Englishness. Perhaps most importantly of all, the emergence of a stable and consistently identified model of English national character occurred concomitantly with the social construction of cricket as the national game.

Cricket better fits the English ‘national mood’ of nostalgia (Ackroyd 2004: 442) than any other sport. While to some extent all contemporary English sports are infused with celebrations of a romanticized past (Maguire 1994), only cricket was ‘defined’ alongside the rise of reactive nostalgia which led in the early 1800s to the ‘invention’ of Englishness itself. Only in cricket is the construction of contemporary celebrity so significantly shaped by nostalgia. While the statistical nature of cricket enables temporal comparison (Williams 1999), the centrality of statistics is as much a manifestation as it is a consequence of the importance of nostalgia.

Cricket can also be seen to be inexorably inscribed into both English landscape and language. One of the reasons why cricket is widely used in marketing ‘England’ and promoting tourism is that it is so closely associated with ideas about the English national landscape (Bairner *et al.* 2007). The image of an English cricket ground is visually distinct (though not to say lacking in imitators) and the enduring images of both the game and the nation are deeply intertwined with its rural landscape and (Church of England) churches in particular. In the popular imagination the game can thus be conceived of as played and watched by people who are seen to ‘truly’ belong to the nation, inherently linked to its ‘unique’ and visually verifiable characteristics. Moreover, just as ‘evocations of English landscape ... [often project] a Southern Englishness in the name of the whole’ (Matless 1998: 17), so cricket played in the Southern English counties dominates representations of the game (Williams 1999: 9). Cricket has been subject to a more extensive literaturization and thus is more closely connected to the English language than any other sport (Bateman 2009). Just as an emerging literary class helped define English national identity, so they

also 're-invented' cricket as the national game in the early 1800s. As Simons (1996: 50) concludes, 'No other sport has produced such a plethora of popular representations or has had to carry such a cultural and political weight.'

Cricket and Englishness can therefore be seen to intersect in multiple ways. Just as it could be claimed that no other nationality is as obsessed as the English are with the weather (Paxman 1999; Fox 2005), so no other sport is as subject to changes in light, precipitation or humidity. Cricketers break for 'tea'. It is surely just a happy coincidence that St George's Day falls at the start of the cricket season in the Northern hemisphere, but it was nonetheless an influential stimulus to the development of cricket in such diverse places as Bermuda (Manning 1995), Corfu and New York.

Perhaps most significantly cricket and Englishness are both somewhat enigmatic. For Schwarz (1992: 46), Englishness is 'an indefinable matter of being, incapable of systematic explanation and beyond the powers of foreigners either to comprehend or to emulate'. Similarly Holt (1989: 1) has said of cricket that, 'To foreigners ... [it] was a uniquely English and Imperial thing quite beyond ordinary understanding'. Maguire (1993: 297) has identified the commonality between cricket and Englishness in this respect, noting that 'just as Englishness is represented as an indefinable matter of being, and beyond the powers of foreigners to comprehend, so too with the subtleties of cricket'.

Yet as evocative and varied as these links are they amount to little more than re-description. As noted throughout *Globalizing Cricket*, 'national character' (and of course the same applies to sports forms) is a social construction. National character and national identity are 'more a matter of exclusion and opposition than some more or less unchanging cultural "essence"' (Reviron-Piégay 2009: 2). This is as true in the English case as it is in the American, and as true in the creation of self-identity as in the 'Othering' of French, Caribbean, or Pakistani people and societies. In linking cricket and English national character we merely see that the two have been defined according to similar social processes. The more searching question, therefore, is what are these processes and how do they impact on both the game and the national identity of these people. It is my contention that cricket and English national identity have been structured according to a set of interdependencies specific to: a) a shared historical development; b) successfully heading an Empire; and, perhaps somewhat paradoxically c) being a dominant but submerged nation within the British nation-state.

A central reason for the extensive cross-over between cricket and Englishness is that their histories are so deeply intertwined. The development of parliamentary democracy, the emergence of a consistent and coherent sense of English national character, and the rise and fall of Empire occur in conjunction with paradigmatic shifts in cricket. Moreover the national identity and the sport share a legacy of *pre-modern* formation. Citing a range of different 'origin' points, a number of authors have argued that English

national identity predates the nineteenth-century rise of European nationalism and thus challenges the 'modernist' view of the development of nations and nationalism (see Chapter 2). Haselar (1996) argues that contemporary expressions of Englishness are underpinned by a pre-industrial trinity of land, class and race. Cricket (as noted in the Introduction) could also be described as *un*-modern in a whole range of ways. The existence of multiple game forms, the tolerance of inequality, the lack of playing role specialization and the *non*-embrace of spatial, temporal and environmental rationalization, are elements of the contemporary game which contrast with the defining characteristics of modern sports. The very organizational structure of cricket is based upon representative units (the West Indies, English counties, an 'England' national team that formally embraces but titularly excludes the Welsh, while covertly incorporating the Scots and Irish) that are incongruent with the identity groups which prevail in the modern world.

Cricket also correlates with a historical orientation which makes English national identity more or less distinct. In his comparison of English and French national identities, Kumar (2006a) argues that a distinguishing feature of the former is an assumption of a seamless historical continuity. This is contrasted against a French history punctuated by disjunctures. England has resisted invasion for almost 1,000 years whereas France has twice been occupied in the last 100 years. England's 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 in which the authority of the monarchy was peacefully supplanted by parliamentary democracy is placed in contradistinction to the French Revolution in which the republican defeat of the monarchy was itself rapidly superseded by dictatorship. Cricket, above all sports, reinforces this English historical perspective. Cricket was formed before other (team) sports and it was claimed to be the national game at the point in time at which a sense of Englishness was consolidated into a relatively coherent form. Its own traditions, moreover, were 're-invented' 200 years ago to establish the now widely held perception that the game emerged organically out of old English folk culture, and thus emphasizes its historical continuity. In contrast, other major team sports such as rugby and football have much shorter histories, are more directly linked to modernist developments such as urbanization and industrialization, and emerged in a process of bifurcation stimulated by class conflicts between the established of Eton and the parvenus of Rugby 'public' School (Dunning and Sheard 1979/2005). Perhaps at a subconscious and symbolic level, the English veneration of forms of cricket which span a number of days and have component parts (innings) of considerable temporal variability, relate to this dominant (though not to say incontestable) interpretation of English history. The belief that a proposed cricket tour to Paris was cancelled on the eve of the 1789 revolution provides a perfect anecdote locating the game within the nations' respective histories of continuity and change.

Cricket also bears the imprint of the peculiarly British imperial experience. Further exploring the contrast between English and French national identity,

Kumar (2006a: 419) argues that while France was ‘undoubtedly the second imperial power of the nineteenth century ... Second was not enough’. There were also greater tensions between French colonists and colonized groups which stemmed from the former’s attempt to impose a relatively standardized model of relations in their Empire. This again contrasts with the distinctly varied local relations within the British Empire (see Chapter 3). Thus, the relative success/failure of English and French imperialism led to opposite tendencies; ‘unlike the French, the English have little tradition of reflection on nationalism and national identity’ (Kumar 2006a: 423). It was against this backdrop that a ‘curiously passionless devotion’ (Paxman 1999: 204) became associated with English cricket spectatorship. Only relatively recently has the Barmy Army emerged, their style of support juxtaposed against the traditions of the game. Even now their presence continues to be a source of debate and tension.

The respective imperial legacies of France and England, and their subsequent impact on national identities, are also distinct. In contrast to the rather conflictual French imperial withdrawal, British de-colonization ‘was remarkably peaceful’ (Kumar 2006a: 421). The French showed a propensity towards assimilative social policies for immigrant groups from their Empire, while the British favoured pluralism and (until recently) an emphasis on multiculturalism. Cricket both mirrors and plays an active part in the peaceful dismantling of the British Empire and, as discussed in Chapter 7, the contemporary experiences of Britain’s minority ethnic groups. Though neither the move from colonial to post-colonial relations, nor the shifting power balance in international cricket has occurred without their own tensions, both could be claimed to have been relatively consensual compared to similar processes in other societies or sports.

As this example illustrates, far from being incongruous, the notions of cricket as the quintessential English game and the game par excellence of the British Empire are directly connected. English nationalism is a form of imperial or missionary nationalism (Kumar 2006b). Imperial nations tend to develop a particular kind of nationalism, distinct from most forms of nineteenth-century nationalism, because Empires necessarily consist of multiple ethnicities. Consequently imperialists must define their distinctiveness and/or superiority in terms of their mission and their creation – the Empire – rather than in terms of the people who created it. Correlatively, ‘the right attitude has to be modesty and perhaps even self-deprecation’ (Kumar 2006b: 6). The way the English could rather paradoxically congratulate themselves on the cricketing achievements of Australians and West Indians is an apposite example of this attitude. Rather than English failure, such defeats demonstrated the success of a ‘civilizing mission’ and were cited as evidence of the strength of the Empire. The conventions which dictated that competing teams would wear near identical clothing and that spectators should treat the achievements of both sides with equal respect can be explained in similar terms. Imperial nationalism meant that it was the project, the game, which was cause for celebration,

not the individuals who played it or the nations they represented. While the ethos that 'it matters not who won and lost, but how you played the game' applied across all British sports, only cricket, with its peculiar accommodation of contests with no definitive outcome, and the historical dominance of drawn games relative to victories/defeats, had a structure which served this very purpose. Thus a neat synergy arose: having an Empire constrained the celebration of English national identity; cricket was socially constructed in such a way that victories were relatively rare, and their overt celebration rarer still; cricket was the imperial game *par excellence*. Those in the colonies may not have always seen it in this light (see Chapter 3) but cricket consistently provided the English with opportunities for the manifestation of this particular kind of imperial nationalism. Only cricket allowed the English to 'substitute[d] pride in their empire for the assertion of their own national identity' (Reviron-Piégay 2009: 2).

The structural accommodation of inequalities which marks cricket out from most modern sports may also be attributed to imperial nationalism. Inequality was, of course, a fundamental principle of imperialism, but both cricket and British imperialism were shrouded in an ideological cloak of equity. Phrases like 'It's not cricket' projected an aura of equality on a game uniquely structured in ways which perpetuated and allowed for the existence of elements of unfairness. The cricket community's tolerance of South African apartheid was more pronounced and more enduring than that of any other sporting community. The insistence that sport and politics should not mix blunted attempts to upturn the status quo. Similarly the Empire was ruled by the apparently neutral notion of Law without inviting inquiry into whose laws, and in whose interests such laws were applied. As C.L.R. James (1963) was perhaps the first to elucidate, the desire to challenge the structures of political and economic discrimination of Empire was not matched by a desire to challenge sporting injustices. There remains a marked reluctance within post-colonial nations to question or challenge the organization of the international game into three discrete groups (full, associate and affiliate nations), even though access to the top tier has been granted just three times since 1954. The sustained nature of this inequality has meant that once attained, membership has never been revoked, either during extended periods when teams have failed to win a match (it took Bangladesh five years to win their first test and a further four years to win their second) or even simply to play a match (Zimbabwe did not play a single test between 2006 and 2011). FIFA by way of contrast provides all member states with equal voting rights regardless of competitive success.

The imperial influence on English nationalism also helps us to understand why cricket has remained a game in which international participation is relatively restricted. While, as noted in Chapter 2, national sports may either be fostered through sporting isolation or competition with a nation's rivals, cricket enabled Englishness to take a third path. Where sports like football, and

to a lesser extent rugby, necessarily entailed competition with other nations, the somewhat stilted global diffusion of cricket both structured and was structured by the lack of nationalist self-reflection which has been identified as characteristic of English national identity. The balance meant that England was not so insular that cricket was an inward looking and entirely esoteric pastime, for such an arrangement would not have suited a people which has traditionally seen itself as inclusive and expansive (Kumar 2003a). Neither, however, was competition sufficiently international that more fundamental questions of identity and difference were inevitably posed. Rugby separated England from the Celtic Nations and thus provided a basis for the oppositional definition of these national identities. England competed against Europeans and South Americans at football. The structure of international competition in cricket suited the imperial character of English nationalism for while Ireland, Australia, South Africa, the West Indies, etc. were clearly not English, neither were they entirely alterior. Cricket was a family affair but the family was a flexible unit, as the biographies of R.A. Fitzgerald, Gregor MacGregor, Ranjitsinjhi, Basil D'Oliveira and Tony Grieg demonstrate. Cricket augmented 'the absence of a tradition of reflection on the English state itself, and of its character in comparison with other states' (Kumar 2006b: 5).

Imperial nationalism can also be seen in the *active role* the English play in reproducing the enigmatic, ineffable character of cricket. The citation with which this chapter opens encapsulates this point. This anonymously authored verse, marketed by the MCC as 'classic', formally describes the relationship 'foreigners' have with the game. Yet more deeply perhaps it represents the fundamental *dis-inclination* of the English to share cricket indiscriminately. The ambiguity of the term wicket – the name for the twenty-two-yard playing area or pitch, the three stump and two bail structure at either end of that playing area, and a synonym for dismissed batters – is another example. It is remarkable that in a sport which has such extensive and complicated laws it is not thought necessary for key terms to be mutually exclusive. Rather cricket is subject to a largely unconscious but nonetheless systematic obfuscation and, through that obfuscation, an exclusionary boundary is constructed. The use of humour may absolve the English from the negative connotations associated with such boundary maintenance but English cricket discourse shares with English literature 'an odd see-saw between a frustrating reticence about the nation's actualities and an odd, chatty explicitness about that very reticence' (Wood 2004: 59). Cricket is a visually distinct manifestation of Englishness, but at the same time that everybody can see it, like a cryptic crossword, only some certain people have the 'code' required to make sense of it. Just as the English have 'always been reluctant to provide their own definition of Englishness' (Reviron-Piégay 2009: 1), so they have been reluctant to provide a clear explication of their national game. It is probably for this very (ironic) reason that cricket's laws are so extensive.

The construction of an imperial nationalism was however also a consequence of internal colonialism and thus also had ramifications for relationships between England and the Celtic nations. As Kumar (2006b: 8) points out, 'to have celebrated their own English identity, as the creators and directors of Great Britain, would have been impolitic in the extreme', and similarly the celebration of cricketing dominance had to be delicately managed. For centuries cricket has been played throughout the British Isles and at times it has been very popular in all three Celtic nations, but historically there has been a perception that although the Irish, Scots and Welsh (unlike, for example, the French) are equipped to understand the game, they choose not to play or attach any great significance to it. In their different ways each nation has collaborated with the English and freely donated its most valuable assets – its best players and administrators. English cricket quietly subsumed the Welsh and the more 'useful' aspects of Scottish and Irish cricket within their structures. For Ackroyd (2004: 237) 'Englishness is the principle of appropriation' and in cricket, more than any other sport, we see the appropriation of other nations' resources. Governance by a 'club' (the MCC) rather than a more conventional national governing body of sport – an association or a union – enabled such incorporation to pass either unnoticed or with minimal resistance. The quintessential English game assumed the mantle of the sport which united and defined the *British* Empire without debate or contestation. Thus cricket continued to be ascribed as the quintessential English game not through separation or distinction from its closest neighbours, but through the thoroughly and uniquely English trait of conflating England and Britain. As Kumar (2006b: 8–9) notes in relation to the British imperial commitment to free trade, 'It was a happy circumstance that allowed the English, as the core nation of British Society, to link themselves to a cause that both expressed their national interest and at the same time loudly proclaimed its non-national or anti-national character.' The very same could be said about cricket. Given the more general role of sport in dividing the British Isles and acting as a forum for the expression of national difference, perhaps the most English aspect of the quintessential English game has been the continuation of this elision for so long.

As a consequence of these three factors – historical development, imperialism, and relationship to the rest of Britain – cricket and English national identity incorporate similar elements of ethnic and civic nationalism. If Englishness is rooted in notions of primordialism expressed through a nostalgic reverence of a rural past, so myths regarding the emergence and development of cricket portray 'natural' or organic origins for the game within a single part of a single nation. Correlatively, cricket's relatively restricted global diffusion is explained in terms equally 'innate' to other people and places; namely 'limitations' in character (of, for example, Americans or the French) or climate (of, for example, Scotland, Ireland or Canada). With reference to civic nationalism, the constructs of firstly Britain and then Empire depended on citizenship being the primary criteria

of membership. As we have seen, a peculiarly imperial nationalism emerged. Concomitantly, cricket is fundamentally linked to a notion of inclusion such that Australians, South Africans, sub-continental Asians and West Indians (if not the continental Europeans or Americans) can, and have frequently been, assimilated into the English game. The use of the term ‘foreign *visitor*’ in the chapter’s opening quote is quite deliberate, for as exclusionary as cricket can be, the ultimate message is that if one were to stay long enough, one could come to understand the game and thus adopt the national identity. Perhaps the earliest example of this was Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales, who had cricket bats sent to his school in Hanover and later died from a cricket-inflicted injury. Amongst the most recent are Eoin Morgan, Kevin Pietersen and Monty Panesar. The embrace of white South African cricketers into the ‘England’ team in recent years – starting with Allan Lamb, Robin (and Chris) Smith, and most recently manifest through Pietersen, Jonathon Trott and Craig Kieswetter – is perhaps the most striking example. The process of ‘Othering’ that we saw in Chapter 9 again demonstrates the subtle distinctions in identities, constructing for the English not merely a dichotomous sense of ‘us’ and ‘them’, but an ‘us’, ‘them’ and an in-between category; people who in some ways are more like ‘us’ than ‘them’, but who remain, and will always remain, distinct from ‘us’. Here cricket and English national identity exhibit a similar coalescence of ethnic and civic nationalisms.

Cricket has continued to be the quintessential English game because both cricket and English national identity have proved remarkably flexible. Like the English political system, flexible enough to retain the monarchy but strip it of all but symbolic power, radical organizational changes in cricket have been completed with remarkably little conflict. As governance has passed from the MCC to the TCCB to the ECB, the former has retained the role of ‘guardian of the game’ in a development which is akin to English cricket’s own ‘Glorious Revolution’. The decision to stage the first ever ‘home’ test match outside England (in Cardiff in 2009) is a further example. This flexibility can also be seen in the existence of multiple and mutually co-existing forms of cricket. New formats are a response to domestic economic challenges and the global development of interdependency ties but the retention of the traditional format belies the lingering influence of previously hegemonic groups. As Reviron-Piégay (2009: 4) notes ‘one of the main paradoxes of Englishness [is that] it is both permanent and ever-changing, continuous and transient, fixed and flexible’. So too cricket.

Indeed, the relationship between Englishness and cricket has been strengthened rather than undermined by recent crises of English national identity. When ‘questions of English national identity became a matter of public debate in the 1990s’ (Kumar 2006b: 4) they were more tellingly observed in cricket than any other English sport. Cricket was used as the medium for exclusionary discourses such as those initiated by Norman Tebbit and Michael Henderson,

and John Major's defensive rhetoric against the transference of powers from the United Kingdom to the European Union (Kumar 2003a). While elements of more celebratory nationalism emerged across a range of sports around the turn of the twenty-first century, the culture of spectatorship changed more radically and more markedly in cricket than in other sports. In contrast to the Football Association and Rugby Football Union which continue to view national affiliation as a redundant addition to their titles, cricket's governing body was reformed in 1997 to include, for the first time, the explicitly nationalistic mention of 'England'. *Jerusalem*, with its reference to 'England's green and pleasant land', started to be sung at the beginning of each day of home test matches, whereas the *British* national anthem ('God Save the Queen') is sung at football and rugby internationals. It is perhaps no coincidence that on-field performances have improved as well, with England winning their first international competition in 2010 – the Twenty20 World Cup – and becoming the world's leading test team in 2011. Once national identity did matter to the English so, it seemed, did winning at cricket.² Consequently, cricket would supply the sporting celebrity which most closely resonated with this emerging sense of Englishness. Footballer David Beckham may have greater global recognition but his celebrity persona is linked much more to cross-national trends in masculinity, and metrosexuality in particular (Cashmore and Parker 2003). The Flintoff celebrity, by contrast, incorporates characteristics traditionally defined as typically English. He is more rooted, more normal, less manufactured. He acts as a stable reference point in a changing world by evoking a strong sense of English nostalgia. His size, his strength, his battle with injuries, and even perhaps his relationship with alcohol, make him the very embodiment of Englishness. It is this combination of continuity and change, which makes cricket such a paradoxical beast, which leads to its acclaim as the quintessential English game, and explains its cultural significance today and for the last 200 years of British history.

Theoretical reflections

I stated in the Introduction that the underlying theoretical framework of this book was largely drawn from Norbert Elias's figurational sociology. While reference to Elias was more prominent in the earlier chapters, my intention was always that the debt to Elias's work and concepts should not dominate the narrative of the book. My goal was to make the global development of cricket, rather than the advocacy of a particular theory, the central theme. However, in concluding *Globalizing Cricket* it is important to reflect on the theory used to understand the mass of empirical data, and on the role of figurational sociology in providing an interpretative and analytic framework.

The structure of the book, the desire to produce a developmental analysis of a single sport over a number of centuries and human generations, fundamentally

stems from a commitment to a specific kind of historical sociology. Cricket provides a particularly useful vehicle for demonstrating the validity of this approach. Its status as the quintessential English game, its social significance in certain parts of the world (and concomitantly its irrelevance in others), its influence in understanding the experiences of minority ethnic groups in contemporary Britain, and its role in structuring the way English people have conceived of themselves and other peoples over time, could not be undertaken without an acute sense of the importance of process. One does not need to be a historical sociologist to appreciate that an understanding of the game requires a sense of history for, as we have seen, historical sensitivity is a prominent feature of cricket discourses. But being a figurational sociologist does lead one to embark on research which foregrounds process over present; that focuses above all on changes over time. The comparison of media descriptions of Flintoff with Nyren's account of *The Cricketers of my Time* is a particularly pertinent example.

Equally important and similarly endemic throughout the text is the notion of interdependence. Interdependence and process should not be abstractly separated – both are characteristic of all social relations – but the contours of interdependence become most apparent when relations undergo the most radical change. The *changing* character of interdependent relationships between members of the English aristocracy provides the context for the emergence of a systematic and (semi-)standardized set of Laws for cricket. Interdependence between the English aristocracy and the masses, and between participants in the game from different social classes, explains the establishment of cricket as the national game (and all the myths that went along with this) in conjunction with the rather more esoteric development of tactical innovation (the introduction of round arm and over arm bowling). The development of interdependency ties as a consequence of Empire serves as the basis for an understanding of the global diffusion of the game, while the specificity of those ties (for example in America compared to the Caribbean, compared to the 'internal colonialism' of Britain), explains the adoption/adaptation/rejection of the game. They are also crucial to understanding further developments in the Laws and playing conventions such as Bodyline and the subsequent West Indian utilization of short pitched fast bowling. As shown in the concluding chapters, interdependence fundamentally shapes the way the English see themselves and others. National identity and national character are defined in opposition to specific groups of others, but to fully understand such relationships one must examine the dynamic interdependence, rather than simply the co-existence, of the respective parties.

There are, however, two fundamental premises of Elias's notion of interdependence that are particularly relevant here. First, Elias stressed the multipolarity of human relationships. We see the importance of this concept at various times in *Globalizing Cricket*. One can only explain the development of cricket in America with reference to the complex balance of interdependencies between different groups within this emerging nation, and between specific

groups within America and Britain. This point is equally true for the development of cricket in the Caribbean. The very notion of diaspora discussed in Chapter 7 develops from an attempt to understand human relationships as relatively dynamic and fluid. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of cricket in the Celtic nations. The emergence of the Barmy Army, marked by both the group's rejection of English cricketing traditions and their appropriation of football and alternative cricketing spectatorship styles, is another case in point.

Second, Elias argued that the unintended consequences of human action are equally if not more important than intended actions. *Globalizing Cricket* provides many examples of this theoretical emphasis. For instance there is no evidence to suggest that the codification of cricket was intended to aid the diffusion of the game within Britain or more widely. The 're-invention' of cricket in the early nineteenth century was not designed to enable the game to play a fundamental role in the construction of Empire, and the range of unintended consequences of cricket's diffusion as part of British imperialism are myriad. Certainly it was never envisaged, nor could it have been, that cricket should provide an antithetical focus for the development of American nationalism, that it should become an important vehicle for post-colonial national self-assertion, or a source of identity construction for latter twentieth century diasporas. No one could have foreseen that the one thing that would be able to unite twenty-first century India, a country 'with 22 official languages, differing customs and traditions, is probably cricket' (Nair 2011: 574). The development of an introspective and defensive national identity, what I have here called malign Englishness, undoubtedly acted as a spur for benign Englishness in ways that were clearly unintended. To return to an analogy used in the Introduction, human interdependence works like re-bounding ripples in a pond, intermingling in multiple, complex and unanticipated ways.

But as noted at the outset, figurational sociology (especially as applied to the study of sport) is largely associated with questions about the internal and external regulation of violence. This is a theme which is more-or-less present throughout *Globalizing Cricket*. Reference to violence is most explicit in Chapters 1 and 2 which draw on previous work in which I sought to demonstrate the relevance of Elias's theory of civilizing processes to the study of cricket (Malcolm 2002a. See also Malcolm 2004). While it was not the intention to undertake a further demonstration or defence of that thesis, re-examination of the early codification of the game and the emergence of additional empirical evidence reinforces the earlier conclusion that,

one can identify a pattern so distinct that the clarification (and standardization) of a range of rules can most adequately be conceived as indicative of broader, more deep-rooted social change ... [that] when we come to analyze why particular sports came to have the rules that we see today, we must recognize that the desire for standardization may take place in a context of status rivalry, and that ... a significant aspect of that rivalry relates to violence and its control. (Malcolm 2005: 115)

But it is also the case that the broader content of this book *extends* our understanding of the relationship between cricket and civilizing processes. Violence and its regulation are persistent themes in the development of the game. In addition to the above, the establishment of cricket as England's national game took place amidst a debate about the emergence of relatively violent practices and the concomitant obfuscation of cricket's history of relatively violent and unruly conduct. The diffusion of the game within the British Empire is characterized by an explicit 'civilizing mission'. Postcolonial relations are mediated by notions of (un)acceptable levels of violence within the game (firstly in relation to Bodyline and latterly in the emergence of the West Indies as the pre-eminent team in world cricket). The response within Britain to the presence of different diasporic communities, and the continued characterization of 'other' peoples, is infused with the belief that differing degrees of violence characterize different cultures. While we see a distinct trend over the 300 years that codified cricket has existed towards lower levels of violence, we also see a concurrent shift from external to internal regulation such that expectations regarding social experiences of violence become less frequently prescribed and more ingrained as part of habitus. While cricket-related deaths in the eighteenth century were treated as regrettable but unavoidable parts of the game, an uneven pitch in Jamaica at the end of the twentieth century, was described as an unacceptable 'dice of death'.

Perhaps more compelling than all of this however is the persistence of the view that the English (and thus also the sport which epitomizes this national group) are distinguished by their peaceable nature. For centuries, the English have taken considerable pride in this (supposed) character trait, and cricket has been integral to sustaining that ideology. Cricket therefore meets the fundamental premise on which Elias defined civilizing processes. For Elias, 'civilization' is a concept which 'expresses the self-consciousness of the West. One could even say: the national consciousness. It sums up everything which Western society of the last two or three centuries believes itself superior to earlier societies or "more primitive" contemporary ones' (Elias 2000: 5). For the English, cricket is deeply implicated in this self-conception. This is why participation in the game is highly valued but not indiscriminately shared. When we talk about cricket as the quintessential English game, we refer to the way cricket is an expression of national consciousness; i.e. a sense of superiority. This sense of superiority consistently entails beliefs about the relative abilities of different groups to behave in emotionally and physically restrained ways.

The long term analysis of cricket therefore demonstrates that large scale social processes have impacted upon emotions and psychological life (van Krieken 1998), as expressed through social identities and the rules or norms which govern the way in which cricket is played. In terms of social identities, we can see that the parliamentarization of political conflict occurred concurrently with the British aristocracy's adoption of the game as a vehicle for status rivalry.

The 're-invention' of cricket as the national game occurred in a context of changing international and domestic relations; specifically, a shifting balance of power between the English/British state and continental European nations, and the reformation of the aristocracy in response to revolution in France and the rising power and wealth of an industrial middle class in Britain. Social identities as expressed through cricket were similarly influenced by the process of both 'internal' and 'external' Empire building. Playing the game became an expression of a new form of identity related to imperial insider/outsider status. It is no coincidence that the popularity of cricket began to wane in post-Civil War America, that the public extolling of the Empire-unifying properties of the game became most explicit as the 'colonial' era began to end, that cricket has been deeply implicated in post-1945 race relations in Britain, or that devolution, the political and economic unification of Europe, etc. has impacted upon the way in which the English express their national identity through cricket. These large scale social processes clearly and consistently impact on social identity in multiple ways.

But in addition to this we can see that broad changes to the social structure of society occur in conjunction with micro-level developments in emotional control. The codification of cricket, which converged with the wider pacification of English/British society, entailed a coherent pattern of violence regulation. The changing social status of cricket in English society during the nineteenth century entailed a new imagining of both a sense of English character and the symbiotic relationship of the game to that character. Beliefs about the consequences of playing the game on the development of a specific character and moral worth took on an added dimension under imperialism. The golden age of cricket (a period dominated by stylish amateur batsmen who expressed a particular masculine habitus) occurs at the high point of Empire (Maguire 1993). Not only did cricket cultivate the independent, forthright, self-disciplined persona of English national character, it countered the effeminate, weak and cowardly character traits perceived amongst the colonized populations. In the post-colonial period micro-level developments in personality can be seen through the revision of English national identity in which characteristics such as openness, tolerance and compassion become valued above those of a more insular and exclusive sense of Englishness.

Consequently figurational sociology provides us with a particular framework for understanding national character and national identity. I have stressed throughout that national character is a social construction. Nations consist of groups stratified by class, gender, region, etc., and the dynamics of such divisions are writ large on the development of cricket. Nations are also somewhat arbitrarily constructed, influenced by unanticipated migrations, geographical features, political alliances. The English perception of themselves as 'an Island race' is a pertinent example of the unreflective way people can respond to an imagined, not to say fallacious, unity (for Britain rather than

England is an island). The counter evidence to the notion that the English are a peaceable people – the violent origins of the early game, the subjugation of peoples through Empire building, the English ‘invention’ of Bodyline bowling, the frequency of injury in the game today – is another. But accepting such subjectivism does not mean that we must reject the concept of national character in its entirety. If, as we have seen here, micro-level changes in emotional control relate to broader social structural changes, then it stands to reason that people in different social structural arrangements – that is to say nations – behave in different ways.

Elias’s sociology of knowledge helps us to understand that within any imagining of self-identity there will be a mixture of more or less sustainable beliefs. In his work on established-outsider relations (Elias and Scotson 1994), Elias described how ‘fantasies’ about social groups were related to power relations. He described how self-perceptions differ according to the social power of respective groups, with the relatively powerful able to generate and sustain ideas of their own ‘group charisma’ while concomitantly perpetuating ‘group disgrace’ beliefs about less powerful groups of people (which in turn were based on the behaviour of the ‘minority of the worst’ within that group). Elias further argued that what constitutes ‘knowledge’ is most likely to persist unrevised in situations in which that knowledge has use value for its holders. That value stems from the emotional comfort knowledge brings, either in the sense of that knowledge ‘working’ when practically applied in real life situations, or when holding that knowledge enhances well-being, such as feelings of security or superiority. But for Elias knowledge, as all social constructs, is a process. Knowledge that doesn’t ‘work’ in either of the above senses is jettisoned over time, whilst knowledge which does becomes more concrete and becomes embedded as a system of beliefs.

Consequently, within the framework that Elias established, it is perfectly possible to argue that national character is relatively though not solely subjectively drawn, to suggest that within any national group there exists a variety of identities and behavioural norms which come to be seen (in unequal ways) as representative of that group, and that acts which contradict that group’s charismatic representation (for example of violence perpetrated against subaltern populations during Empire) can be acknowledged to have occurred, but rejected as defining features of that population’s behavioural norms. Similarly a group can maintain ideas about their own cosmopolitan openness are clearly contradicted by the negative conceptualizations they hold of other groups (see Chapters 8 and 9). Moreover an ideological notion of character can become more ‘real’, or at least more widespread, over time. As knowledge is a process, when dominant groups (particular social classes or nationalities) define themselves in opposition to the violence done by historical forebears or ethnic ‘Others’, this can act as a self-fulfilling prophecy and have a spiralling effect, refining behavioural control and emotional norms over time. Behaviour that

is expected becomes habitually expressed. Within cricket this can most vividly be seen in England during the nineteenth century, as the game developed into the peaceable and national game it was prematurely claimed to be. It is only by tracing cricket's globalizing journey that such processes can be laid bare.

If *Globalizing Cricket* has made this peculiar sport more understandable then it will have served its purpose. If this book has more clearly delineated why cricket continues to play such a fundamental role in the way in which the English people imagine themselves and the way in which people self-identify, then so much the better. If as part of this exploration I have clarified or illuminated broader aspects of national character, national identity, nationalism or even aspects of figurational sociology, then it will have exceeded my expectations. But perhaps the most valuable function a book like this can serve is to demonstrate that sports, such prominent features of our social landscape, are not just commonsensical everyday phenomena which require little or no investigation or can be dismissed in a repetitive and perfunctory way. Rather sports are social constructions which can act as a prism via which we can seek to understand more about the social world in which we live. While cricket and Englishness is almost pleonastic, it remains the case that we cannot properly understand one until we have a fuller understanding of the other.