INTELLECTUAL COOPERATION AT THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

SHAPING CULTURAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONS

HISTORICAL SERIES N°5

EDITED BY
MARTIN GRANDJEAN AND
DANIEL LAQUA

United Nations

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We are immensely grateful to staff at the United Nations Office in Geneva (UNOG) for their support in publishing this book, in particular Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert, Hermine Diebolt and Pierre-Etienne Bourneuf. They were crucial to the genesis of this venture, and it is thanks to their support – as well as the significant contribution of UNOG's Production and Support Service – that it has been possible to publish this study in the United Nations Historical Series. Moreover, in Paris, Adama Aly Pam has been committed to ensuring UNESCO's interest in the history of efforts that predated its own foundation. We also thank Rowan Thompson for his support with copyediting, staff at the Design and Production Section in Geneva for handling the entire production process as well as the UN Publications Service team in New York for ensuring dissemination via the UN iLibrary platform.

While the genesis of this book coincided with one centenary, namely the formation of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (1922), we are pleased that the product of our labours is finished in time for another centenary, namely the formal creation of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in 1925.

Abbreviations

AFSDN	Association française pour la Société des Nations (French Society for the League of Nations)
BSI	Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale (Sino-International Library)
CISH	Comité internationale des sciences historiques (International Committee of Historical Sciences)
CNI	Commissione nazionale Italiana per la cooperazione intellettuale (Italian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation)
CTI	Confédération des travailleurs intellectuels (Confederation of Intellectual Workers)
DHP	Deutsche Hochschule für Politik (German Academy for Politics)
FIAI	Fédération internationale des associations d'instituteurs (International Federation of Teachers' Associations)
IBE	International Bureau of Education
ICIC	International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation
ICO	Intellectual Cooperation Organization
ICSU	International Council of Scientific Unions
ICW	International Council of Women
IECI	International Educational Cinematographic Institute
IFJ	International Federation of Journalists
IIIC	International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMO	International Museums Office
IR	International Relations
ISC	International Studies Conference
KMT	Kuomintang
LNA	League of Nations Association (USA)
LNU	League of Nations Union (UK)
LONSEA	League of Nations Search Engine
NEC	National Economic Council (China)
RSL	Royal Society of Literature (UK)
SFIO	Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière (French Section of the Workers' International, the French socialist party)
UIA	Union of International Associations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
WSCF	World's Student Christian Federation

Preface

Blandine Blukacz-Louisfert and Adama Aly Pam

The history of intellectual cooperation, closely tied to the League of Nations, is a complex saga intertwining humanist ideals, political stakes and geopolitical realities. This book explores the various facets of this venture, spanning a wide range of fields, from education and research to culture and arts. It represents the latest state of research on this topic.

In the aftermath of the First World War, the hope for a more just and peaceful world inspired many minds. The creation of the League embodied this aspiration for a new international order based on law and cooperation. Among the many areas of action for this organization, intellectual cooperation occupied a central place. Intellectuals of the time believed that lasting peace could only be achieved through fruitful cultural and scientific exchanges.

Although the idea that knowledge and culture might bring people together was not new, it gained genuine institutional recognition thanks to the League of Nations. In 1921, the League's Assembly passed a resolution establishing the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), which launched its work the subsequent year. In 1925, the creation of the ICIC's executive body, the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC), marked a decisive step forward. Both bodies implemented numerous projects aimed at promoting intellectual exchange, the circulation of ideas and the protection of copyright.

One of the fundamental missions of intellectual cooperation was the preservation and promotion of intellectual heritage, particularly through the study and enhancement of libraries and archives. This approach clearly reveals one of the core ideals of this cooperation: dismantling barriers to knowledge, opening access to sources and enabling the writing of a truly international history capable of bringing people closer together.

The archives of the Intellectual Cooperation Section of the League of Nations Secretariat, preserved at the United Nations Archives Geneva and now digitized – along with those of the IIIC, the International Office of Museums and the French Committee of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute, preserved by UNESCO – constitute collections of exceptional richness.[1] These archives, bearing witness to the great intellectual voices of the interwar period, are a source of inspiration and hope for the world. Their current digitization allows for broader, more democratic and more equitable access to knowledge. In the spirit of this ideal of breaking down barriers, numerous initiatives have emerged: digital archival platforms, books in the UN Historical Series, and conferences such as the one celebrating the centenary of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (1922–2022). This book has its roots in the latter event and, fittingly, is volume 5 of the UN Historical Series.

[1] The archives of the ICIC are available at https://archives.ungeneva.org/intellectual-cooperation-and-international-bureaux-section. Those of the IIIC are available at https://atom.archives.unesco.org/iiic.

The close collaboration between the United Nations Archives Geneva and UNESCO has enabled a growing number of researchers to benefit from the complementarity of these two institutions to deepen their work. These efforts converge toward a common goal: to promote intellectual exchange as a vector of peace, by making archives accessible and encouraging research into the history of intellectual cooperation.

We hope this volume will inspire readers to appreciate the historical significance of intellectual cooperation and to reflect on its relevance in today's interconnected world.

Introduction

Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations and its Histories

Martin Grandjean and Daniel Laqua

Can the act of gathering a range of intellectuals around a table build better international understanding? Various prominent cultural and scientific figures were confronted with this question when they came together on the League of Nations' premises by the shore of Lake Geneva on 1 August 1922. Having assembled as members of the League's newly established International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), they formed an illustrious cast.[1] Taken at the inaugural session, the picture on the cover of this book depicts the renowned French philosopher and ICIC chair, Henri Bergson. He is flanked by his vice-chair, the Oxford philologist Gilbert Murray and by the Polish medievalist Oskar Halecki, who worked for the League Secretariat and served as ICIC secretary.[2] Yet it is not only the humanities that are represented: figures closer to the window include the two-time Nobel Prize laureate Marie Skłodowska-Curie, the director of Rio de Janeiro's Faculty of Medicine Aloysio de Castro, the Norwegian biologist Kristine Bonnevie and the former Belgian Minister of Science and Arts, Jules Destrée. At the other table are, among others, the Italian law professor and former Minister of Education Francesco Ruffini, the Madrid engineer and inventor Leonardo Torres Quevedo and two US scholars, the astrophysicist George Ellery Hale and his Caltech colleague, future Nobel Prize winner in physics Robert A. Millikan. Another ICIC member and physicist, namely Albert Einstein, does not feature, having cited a trip to Japan in excuse of his absence.[3]

What would later be viewed as an attempt to build a "General Republic of Intelligence" or a "League of the Minds" was, at the time, an initiative whose implications no-one could grasp entirely.[4] The ICIC's formation was initially a short-term response to varied, sometimes contradictory, impulses, including calls from the Assembly of the League of Nations to promote international coordination in education, science and the arts. Many ICIC members were at least partially unaware why they had been selected, and what the amorphous concept of "intellectual cooperation" actually entailed. In the run-up to the first session, Inazō Nitobe – the Japanese Under-Secretary General of the League of Nations – acknowledged that "the scope of the Committee is not defined in so many terms". However, based on existing pronouncements, it could "be surmised […] that the main subjects […] will relate to the exchange of information, the closer relations between universities, and international bibliographical facilities". Nitobe also deemed it "possible that the question of an international language" might arise.[5] Various ICIC members envisioned additional topics. Gilbert Murray, for

1 Photograph of the inaugural session of the ICIC, August 1922, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), P021_01_048.

2 On Halecki's involvement in the ICIC, see Johannes Feichtinger's contribution to this volume as well as Andrzej M. Brzeziński, "Oskar Halecki – the Advocate of Central and Eastern European Countries in the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1925)", *Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej* 48 (2013): 5–19.

3 As the itinerary did not make attendance altogether impossible, other factors – including the political sensitivities relating to Germany's international position – may have been a factor: Siegfried Grundmann, *The Einstein Dossier: Science and Politics – Einstein's Berlin Period* (Berlin: Springer, 2004), 182–3.

4 These terms are taken from, respectively, Julien Luchaire, Discourse, 16 January 1926, 5, UNAG, 13C/37637/48765; and Paul Valéry, Report to the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters, 21 July 1930, 108, UNAG, C.428.M.192.1930.XII.

5 Letter from Inazō Nitobe to Geoffrey Ellery Hale, 7 July 1922, UNAG, R1030/13C/14297/21759.

instance, suggested that the Committee tackle "Arrangements […] by which newspapers could educate their nationals in the conditions and opinion of foreign countries better than they do", helping to overcome the problem "that the Press in every country has too nationalist an outlook".[6]

A few days after the ICIC's inaugural meeting, Nitobe admitted to Eric Drummond, Secretary-General of the League of Nations, some confusion regarding the terminology and remit of the new body: labels such as "International Organisation (sometimes 'Coordination') of Intellectual Work" had provoked "a good deal of misunderstanding". They had nourished perceptions that the League was aiming to create an "International Labour Office for intellectuals". Others believed that the main emphasis would be on education, "and hence terms such as 'Committee on International Education', 'Intellectual Intercourse and Education', and 'Intellectual Development Committee' were used by correspondents".[7] Nitobe and his colleagues hoped "that the title 'Intellectual Cooperation' would do away with these misconceptions".

These precautions did not resolve all issues. Looking back in 1931, the Dutch historian Johan Huizinga – himself an ICIC member from 1936 to 1939 – pointed out that "the translation of *coopération intellectuelle* into English [had] caused some difficulty" because of the different connotations of those two words – an obstacle that had been overcome because, as an "example of true internationalism", the Anglophone participants in these exchanges had agreed for both terms "to be used as English words but in the French sense".[8] Yet among British audiences, the term "intellectual" provoked ambivalent responses, which affected attitudes to the League activities that were subsumed under this heading.[9] While the label "intellectual cooperation" was hence by no means a straightforward matter or unqualified success, it did have its benefits. During the interwar period, it served as an umbrella term, signifying a "big tent" approach that would accommodate different meanings, understandings and aspirations.

There is an understandable tendency to view intellectual cooperation at the League of Nations as a forerunner to the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).[10] After all, the League bodies dealing with intellectual cooperation covered a terrain

6 Letter from Gilbert Murray to Oskar Halecki, 17 July 1922, UNAG, R1030/13C/14297/20826.

7 Inazō Nitobe, "Observations on the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation", 18 August 1922, 1, UNAG, R1031/13/22652/14297.

8 Johan Huizinga, "Function of Intellectual Co-operation in the Organisation of the Contemporary World", in *Proceedings of the Second General Conference of National Committees on Intellectual Co-operation, Paris, July 5th–9th*, 1937 (Geneva: League of Nations, 1938), 52–3.

9 Tomás Irish, "'Abhorrent to English Ears': Anti-Intellectualism and the League of Nations in Interwar Britain", in *History of Intellectual Culture* 3 (2024): 3–23. Irish quotes Gilbert Murray's comments that the "name has about it something priggish, something that sounds to our prejudiced ears 'Latin and not Anglo-Saxon'". These comments originally featured in Gilbert Murray, "Savants and the League: A Humanizing Crusade", *The Times*, 27 August 1931.

10 As a reflection of this approach, see the inclusion of a section entitled "D'une société des esprits à la création de l'UNESCO" at the symposium through which UNESCO marked its sixtieth anniversary, as documented in *60 ans d'histoire de l'UNESCO: Actes du colloque internationale, Paris, 16–18 novembre 2005* (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), 56–98. The title of Renoliet's seminal book is also very revealing in this regard: Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: la Société des Nations et la coopération Intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999).

on which UNESCO came to operate, albeit under very different circumstances.[11] However, while acknowledging thematic links and institutional legacies, we must avoid a teleological treatment of the subject under consideration. The interwar ventures were, in many respects, experimental and open-ended. Intellectual cooperation was an iterative process, slowly groping its way forward before it became institutionalized. The emerging institutional arrangements never turned into a fully-fledged organization, even though officials spoke of an "Intellectual Cooperation Organization" (ICO) from 1931 onwards. Instead, we can interpret intellectual cooperation at the League of Nations as a way of channelling an original organic dynamic – or rather a cluster of concordant dynamics – into different bodies and actors that established various mechanisms, communications and organizational guises.

Our book probes the manifold layers and realms of interwar intellectual cooperation. The League bodies as well as their partners and interlocutors engaged with a wide range of issues, including education, bibliography and librarianship, heritage preservation, museology, the study of international affairs and the material conditions of intellectual workers. The format of an edited volume is ideally suited to the subject as it allows us to capture these multiple facets. In addition to thematic breadth, the pool of contributors provides us with wide-ranging country-specific expertise. The latter is crucial because the shaping of cultural relations was not just a matter of concern for League of Nations officials, or for intellectuals with cosmopolitan proclivities. In fact, intellectual cooperation frequently served as a vehicle for national agendas – some of which were directly steered by diplomats and political leaders, while others came from scholars and artists who in some cases saw themselves as representatives of "national" culture.[12] A growing body of literature acknowledges the interwar years as an era in which cultural diplomacy became a more prominent, and increasingly institutionalized, phenomenon.[13] Our work marks a contribution to this field.

[11] On the transitions that take us to UNESCO's early years, see Jo-Anne Pemberton, "The Changing Shape of Intellectual Cooperation: From the League of Nations to UNESCO", *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 58, no. 1 (2012): 34–50; Glenda Sluga, "UNESCO and the (One) World of Julian Huxley", *Journal of World History* 21, no. 3 (2010): 393–418; Roger Pol Droit, *Humanity in the Making: Overview of the Intellectual History of UNESCO 1945–2005* (Paris: UNESCO, 2005). On a specific UNESCO endeavour, namely the "History of Mankind", but with consideration to UNESCO's place in history more widely, see Paul Betts, "Humanity's New Heritage: Unesco and the Rewriting of World History", *Past & Present* 228, no. 1 (2015): 249–85.

[12] On the representation of national and regional/linguistic cultures at the ICIC, see Martin Grandjean, "A Representative Organization? Ibero-American Networks in the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1939)", in *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-America*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Jaume Subira (New York: Routledge, 2020), 65–89.

[13] Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Diana Roig-Sanz, eds, *Culture as Soft Power: Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022); Benjamin Martin and Elisabeth Piller, "Cultural Diplomacy and Europe's Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: Introduction", *Contemporary European History* 30, no. 2 (2021): 149–63; Charlotte Faucher, "Women, Gender and the Professionalisation of French Cultural Diplomacy in Britain, 1900–1940", *The English Historical Review* 136, no. 583 (2021): 1513–154; Katharina Rietzler, "Before the Cultural Cold Wars: American Philanthropy and Cultural Diplomacy in the Inter-War Years", *Historical Research* 84, no. 223 (2011): 148–64. For two recent articles that explicitly use the framework of cultural diplomacy to examine aspects of interwar intellectual cooperation, see Kaiyi Li and Huimei Zhou, "The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation and Chinese Cultural Diplomacy during the Interwar Period", *The International History Review* 46, no. 2 (2024): 158–75; Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "The Foreign Action of Peripheries, or The Will to Be Seen: Catalan Cultural Diplomacy in the Interwar Period", *Comparative Literature Studies* 59, no. 4 (2022): 836–54.

The present introduction can hardly offer a comprehensive survey of intellectual cooperation, yet it does perform two tasks. First, it outlines the broader development of intellectual cooperation at the League of Nations. Accordingly, the next section provides a brief institutional history, thus contextualizing the more thematic approach taken elsewhere in this volume. Second, it relates the material in this book to past research in the field. Of course, the present book only illuminates *some* aspects of intellectual cooperation: it is a collection of essays, rather than a handbook or encyclopaedia. However, it does show that, and why, intellectual cooperation – within, with and through the League of Nations – mattered to a wide range of actors.

The structure and workings of intellectual cooperation at the League of Nations

The ICIC meeting of 1 August 1922 was by no means the beginning of the story of intellectual cooperation within the League of Nations. Proposals for the coordination of scientific and educational matters through the future League already circulated at the time of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.[14] As the First World War also had manifold cultural dimensions, it is hardly surprising that notions of post-war reconstruction extended to the cultural realm.[15] In practice, these concerns manifested themselves in a plethora of international projects, including the creation of international academic societies, technical coordination institutions, schemes for international schools and universities as well as various other plans to advance mutual understanding through educational and cultural efforts.[16] However, despite the efforts of various groups and organizations, notably the Brussels-based Union of International Associations (UIA), the Covenant of the League of Nations did not address educational, scientific or cultural questions.[17]

The absence of "intellectual" matters within the original design of the League complicated subsequent efforts in this field, but it did not prevent relevant proposals from making their way onto the agenda of the League Assembly sessions of 1920 and 1921. On these occasions, some voices – including the Belgian delegate, Nobel Peace Prize laureate and UIA co-founder Henri La Fontaine – called for the creation of an organization centred around intellectual work or educational issues, yet the Assembly decided not to rush matters.[18] In September 1921, it accepted a resolution by the French politician Léon Bourgeois, the first president of the League of Nations Council. Bourgeois's motion called for the creation of "a Committee to examine international questions regarding intellectual co-operation".[19] This approach amounted to a modest beginning:

[14] For the account of a contemporary observer, see David Hunter Miller, *The Drafting of the Covenant* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1928), 350.

[15] On the war as a cultural conflict, see e.g. Aviel Roshwald and Richard Stites, eds, *European Culture in the Great War: The Arts, Entertainment and Propaganda, 1914–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Alan Kramer, *Dynamic of Destruction: Culture and Mass Killing in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[16] A complete list featuring suggestions for international universities and other intellectual organizations features in Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: la Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018), 107–44.

[17] On the UIA, see Daniel Laqua, Wouter van Acker and Christophe Verbruggen, eds, *International Organizations and Global Civil Society: Histories of the Union of International Associations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019). On the UIA's leaders and their engagement with the League of Nations, see Daniel Laqua, *The Age of Internationalism and Belgium, 1880–1930: Peace, Progress and Prestige* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 194–200.

[18] "L'organisation du travail intellectual" (report by Henri La Fontaine, Second Commission of the Assembly of the League of Nations), December 1920, 3, UNAG, 13/1139/9720.

[19] "Organisation internationale du travail intellectual", *League of Nations Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 6, October 1921, 34.

the plan was to establish a consultative commission that would clarify the needs in this area, rather than a permanent structure. Indeed, the initial budget barely covered the travel of twelve experts for their annual session.[20]

Nonetheless, this tentative project attracted interest and reverberated in different countries, in some cases because it was tied to an investigation into the conditions of "intellectual life". Early on, National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation complemented the work of the ICIC on these matters.[21] As noted in Johannes Feichtinger's contribution to our volume, such bodies emerged in several Central and Eastern European states early on. The particular salience of the League's efforts in the region can be attributed to two factors. First, academics, students, universities and intellectuals in Central and Eastern Europe faced severe hardships, turning them into a focus for various relief efforts.[22] Second, the post-war order meant that states in the region were either new or reconfigured, with contested borders and disputed language politics. In this respect, the engagement in international intellectual efforts was a way of positing national claims.[23] This aspect points to the wider issue, as emphasized by the historian Glenda Sluga: the compatibility and, in some cases, symbiosis of nationalism and internationalism during the interwar years.[24]

In September 1923, the Assembly of the League of Nations decided to amplify the ongoing work for intellectual cooperation: it urged the Council to ask governments to lend their moral and financial support to the ICIC.[25] The Council's subsequent overtures and appeals – as well as approaches from Bergson and his assistant at the ICIC, the French General Inspector of Education Julien Luchaire – met with a positive response from the French Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs.[26] In July 1924, the French government presented a concrete plan: namely to host and fund a Paris-based institution that would serve as the secretariat and executive branch of the ICIC. The initiative raised apprehensions regarding the proposed body's independence (or absence thereof), but the League lacked the means to finance further intellectual cooperation activities by itself. In presenting the proposal to the ICIC chair, the French Minister of Education, François Albert, directly

[20] A week after the resolution was passed, Inazō Nitobe had to fight to prevent the Assembly's Finance Commission from reducing his section's budget, even though it had just been given the additional task of hosting the ICIC. He ultimately succeeded in preventing the cut. See "Commissions II", in *Acts of the Second Assembly of the League of Nations* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1921), 124–6.

[21] Report of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (2nd Session), 15 August 1923, 4, UNAG, 13/14297/30243. At the time, the terms used in English for these national bodies varied: while "National Committee(s) on Intellectual Cooperation" was the most frequent version, "National Committee(s) for Intellectual Cooperation" and "National Commission(s) for Intellectual Cooperation" also appear in the League's documentation. Throughout this volume, we usually refer to "National Committee(s) for Intellectual Cooperation" as the version that works best in English and that also reflects the fact that in several languages, the equivalent preposition indicated that these were entities for intellectual cooperation.

[22] Tomás Irish, "The 'Moral Basis' of Reconstruction? Humanitarianism, Intellectual Relief and the League of Nations", *Modern Intellectual History* 17, no. 3 (2020): 769–800. Irish's subsequent monograph, *Feeding the Mind: Humanitarianism and the Reconstruction of European Intellectual Life, 1919–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), places these ventures into a wider context. On aid efforts aimed at university students in Central and Eastern Europe, see Isabella Löhr, *Globale Bildungsmobilität 1850–1930: Von der Bekehrung der Welt zur globalen studentischen Gemeinschaft* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021).

[23] Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 51–67. For a subsequent expanded English version, see Daniel Laqua, "Internationalism and Nationalism in the League of Nations' Work for Intellectual Cooperation", in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Cham: Palgrave, 2018), 59–85.

[24] Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[25] "Acts of the Fourth Assembly", *League of Nations Official Journal* 4, no. 9 (1923), 109.

[26] Letter from Julien Luchaire to Alfred Coville, 9 January 1924, as cited by Jean-Jacques Renoliet, "La genèse de l'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle", *Relations Internationales*, no. 72 (1992): 392–3.

addressed this point: "you are today in the situation of an inventor who has completed the plan for an admirable machine but who has neither the money nor the necessary material installation to realize it".[27] In September 1924, after heated debates, the Assembly accepted the French offer, launching negotiations between the Secretariat, the French government and an ICIC working group to define the contours of what came to be known as the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC).[28] Having initially failed to gain approval by the French Senate in December 1924, a new bill passed in July 1925 and was then transmitted to the League of Nations, resulting in Julien Luchaire's appointment as IIIC director on 28 July 1925. The Institute began its work between October and November 1925, and was officially inaugurated on 16 January 1926, hosted on prestigious premises at the Palais-Royal in the heart of Paris (Figure i.1).

The IIIC quickly grew in size and spread out into numerous sections and services, as depicted by Figure i.2.[29] From around 30 staff members at its inception in 1925, its personnel grew to over 100 in 1926, reaching more than 140 in 1928, with most individuals – as noted in Jonathan Voges's chapter – being employed on short-term contracts.[30] But this state of grace was short-lived: as early as 1928, voices within the Committee argued that this bureaucratic inflation was not producing the expected results and that the Institute was primarily sustaining a form of French cultural hegemony.[31] Similar criticisms featured prominently at the first international conference of National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation, held in Paris in 1929. To many representatives at the meeting, the IIIC seemed too ambitious – a case of spreading itself too thin on projects that it was struggling to complete.[32] A reform seemed necessary to ensure that an executive committee could oversee the IIIC's activities more effectively: as the ICIC only met once a year, it could not perform such a monitoring role to the desired extent.

As the reform process progressed, a financial expert from the League of Nations and a French financial inspector carried out a joint management audit. Issued in April 1930, their report was damning and highlighted excessive ceremonial spending, "fanciful" management and inconsistencies in the salary scale.[33] The findings were an earthquake for intellectual cooperation and triggered a series of events: Julien Luchaire's resignation; the appointment of his replacement Henri Bonnet, who – after a decade working at the League's Information Section – was much more compatible with the customs of the League Secretariat; and, ultimately, the re-organization of the Institute. All of this was settled before mid-September 1930. A year later, the IIIC saw its staff cut in half. The combination of these austerity measures, but also proactive steps taken by both the ICIC and Bonnet, culminated in a new arrangement: the Council's official recognition of the sum of these

27 Letter from François Albert to Henri Bergson, 24 July 1924, UNAG, 13C/37637/37645.

28 See the report adopted by the Council on 9 September 1924: "Foundation of an International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation: Offer by the French Government", 30th Session of the Council, as featured in the *League of Nations Official Journal* 5, no. 10 (1924): 1550. The Assembly's lively debates are reproduced in the Acts of the Fifth Assembly, 18th Plenary Meeting, 23 September 1924, *League of Nations Official Journal*, Special Supplement 23 (1924): 136–46.

29 For a more detailed study of these organizational charts and their evolution, see Martin Grandjean, "The Paris/Geneva Divide: A Network Analysis of the Archives of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations", in Carbó-Catalan and Roig-Sanz, *Culture as Soft Power*, 69, 74, 89 and 92.

30 For these overall numbers, see Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 187–8.

31 Grandjean, "The Paris/Geneva Divide", 84–8.

32 "Réunion des représentants des commissions nationales de coopération intellectuelle", 18 July 1929, UNAG 5B/9432/13396.

33 "Rapport du Dr. F. Vivaldi, Commissaire aux comptes a[djoint] de la Société des Nations, au Comité d'études sur les buts et l'organisation de la coopération intellectuelle", 25 April 1930, UNAG, 5B/13977/19193.

Figure i.1:
Entrance of the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation at the Palais-Royal (Rue Montpensier, Paris). *Source*: UNAG P140_01_006.

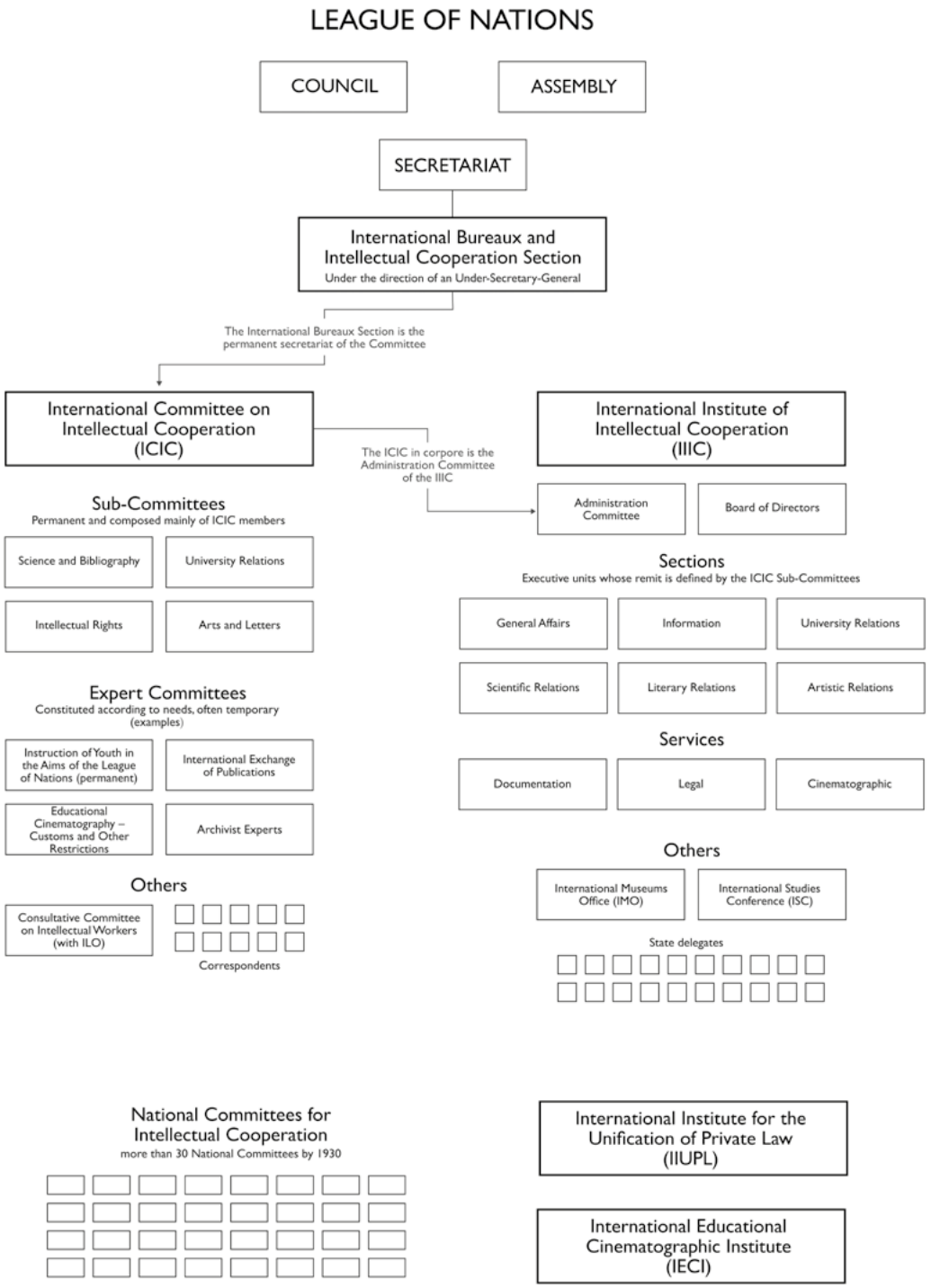

Figure i.2:
Organizational chart for intellectual cooperation within the League of Nations in the second half of the 1920s. At the turn of the 1930s, the reform of the Institute saw the creation of an executive committee to strengthen the ICIC's control over the IIIC and a more flexible structure for its sections. From 1931 onwards, the combination of these bodies was known as the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (ICO).

different bodies as the "Intellectual Cooperation Organization" (ICO) in September 1931.[34] This change in terminology did not create an independent organization, but it did provide intellectual cooperation with a firm place on the League's organizational chart.

The remainder of the 1930s saw the withdrawal of three countries that had been heavily involved in intellectual cooperation: Japan (1933), Germany (1933) and Italy (1937). Of these countries, Fascist Italy had played a particularly prominent part in the League's intellectual cooperation efforts – an aspect that is also being discussed in Benjamin Martin's chapter. Mirroring the French approach, Italy had sponsored a League institute that stood under the umbrella of "intellectual cooperation", the Rome-based International Educational Cinematographic Institute, which closed its gates after the Italian withdrawal.[35]

This is not to say that non-membership of the League necessarily meant complete absence from intellectual cooperation activities, as earlier examples from the ICIC's history illustrate. After all, as reflected in Albert Einstein's – albeit unhappy – involvement in the ICIC, there had been a German presence on the ICIC from the outset, even at a time when German academia was still subject of a wider scientific boycott within international settings.[36] Moreover, the United States were a prominent non-League member that was strongly involved in intellectual cooperation activities – and not just through US intellectuals serving on the ICIC: US philanthropic foundations were an important source of income for various activities in the field of intellectual cooperation, notably the International Studies Conferences.[37] Another non-member state, the Soviet Union, had a complex relationship with the intellectual cooperation ventures, as indicated by Anastassiya Schacht's chapter in this volume. Nonetheless, as she shows, while initial links focused on Russian exiles, Soviet intellectuals increasingly participated in League activities even before the USSR formally joined the League in 1934.

Put differently, it was not a foregone conclusion that the Japanese, German and Italian withdrawals from the League would deal a terminal blow to intellectual cooperation. Indeed, even in the second half of the 1930s, we can see various interactions between bodies dedicated to intellectual cooperations and the countries that would come to form the Axis. What these developments did do, however, was to make ongoing work on the cultural terrain even more contested than it had already been. In the present book, Leandro Lacquaniti's chapter illustrates these issues with a focus on debates that crystallized in Buenos Aires in 1936.

By the end of the 1930s, realizing that it was becoming increasingly difficult to remain impervious to the criticisms directed at the League, the ICO sought to dissociate itself from the

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34 Sixty-fourth session of the Council, *League of Nations Official Journal* 11, no. 11 (1931): 2039–40.

35 On this body, see Christel Taillibert, *L'Institut international du cinématographe éducatif: regards sur le rôle du cinéma éducatif dans la politique internationale du fascisme italien* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1999).

36 Danielle Wonsch, "Einstein et la Commission Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle", *Revue d'histoire des sciences* 57, no. 2 (2004): 509–20; Jimena Canales, "Einstein, Bergson, and the Experiment That Failed: Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations", *MLN* 120, no. 5 (2005): 1168–91.

37 Ludovic Tournès, *Philanthropic Organizations at the League of Nations: An Americanized League?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), chapters 4 and 5; Katharina Rietzler, "Experts for Peace: Structures and Motivations of Philanthropic Internationalism in the Interwar Years", in *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements between the World Wars*, ed. Daniel Laqua (London: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 45–66. On the International Studies Conferences, see Jo-Ann Pemberton, *The Story of International Relations: Cold-Blooded Idealists*, 3 vols. (Cham: Palgrave, 2019–20).

Geneva institution in an attempt to avoid going down with a sinking ship.[38] This development became evident in July 1937. That month, a range of activities took place within the framework of the a "Month of Intellectual Cooperation" at the large-scale International Exposition of Art and Technology in Modern Life in Paris.[39] One such event was the second international conference of National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation, which featured 125 delegates from 43 countries. At the meeting, the Danish minister Peter Munch proposed a supplementary act to the 1924 agreements, with the intention of transforming the IIIC into a truly international organization.[40] Evidently, the time when most actors agreed that the League Secretariat would oversee the Institute was long gone. Accordingly, the ICIC set to work, drafting an act based on Munch's recommendation, and without resistance from the League Assembly, which accepted the principle in September 1937.

Based on positive responses from a majority of League of Nations member states in the spring of 1938, French Foreign Minister Édouard Herriot convened a diplomatic conference in Paris at the end of the year. Some 50 delegations attended, and 21 signed the act that re-founded the IIIC, a document that made no mention of the League of Nations.[41] In May 1939, 37 states signed the act, but only Portugal, France, Switzerland, Norway, Latvia and Romania ratified it. The act finally came into force on 31 January 1940, once Poland and the Netherlands had ratified it, as eight ratifications were required.[42] By then, however, the Institute was little more than an empty shell: it closed its gates in June 1940, a few days before German troops entered Paris.

That said, we should not overlook the extent to which intellectual cooperation remained a matter of concern in the face of war. At one level, the League of Nations presence at the New York world's fair is somewhat symbolic: having opened in April 1939, and hence before the Second World War, the League pavilion continued to operate until the end of the exposition in May 1940. One exhibit (Figure i.3) explicitly stressed the value of intellectual cooperation, proclaiming that "No association of nations can exist without reciprocal intellectual activity between its members". Moreover, the durability of intellectual cooperation went beyond rhetorical affirmation of its value, and beyond the early war years. As Corinne Pernet has shown, after the IIIC's closure in 1940, initiative in the field of intellectual cooperation shifted to actors from the Americas.[43] The question of changing centres of gravity remained important during subsequent transformations. In 1945, the IIIC briefly reopened on its old premises in Paris, before being wound down altogether in 1946. Meanwhile, UNESCO began its operations from the same building – the Palais-Royal – but also with new emphases and as an increasingly globally oriented actor.[44]

38 Grandjean. "The Paris/Geneva Divide", 89–93.

39 Jonathan Voges, "Scientific Internationalism in a Time of Crisis: The Month of Intellectual Cooperation at the 1937 Paris World Fair", in *Placing Internationalism: International Conferences and the Making of the Modern World*, ed. Stephen Legg, Mike Heffernan, Jake Hodder and Benjamin Thorpe (London: Bloomsbury, 2022), 104–17.

40 Peter Munch, "Structure de l'organisation de coopération intellectuelle", included in the Acts of the Second general conference of the National Committees on Intellectual Cooperation, 5–9 July 1937, UNAG, 5B/14390/32496.

41 Minutes of the Meetings of the Paris Diplomatic Conference on Intellectual Cooperation, 30 November 1938, UNAG, 5B/33863/35946.

42 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 146–50.

43 Corinne Pernet, "Twists, Turns and Dead Alleys: The League of Nations and Intellectual Cooperation in Times of War", *Journal of Modern European History*, 12, no. 3 (2014): 342–58. On the question of such shifts, see also Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 223–47, esp. 229.

44 In addition to the work cited in footnote 11, see also Poel Duedahl, *The History of UNESCO: Global Actions and Impacts* (Cham: Palgrave, 2016); and Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, 104–17.

Figure i.3:
Exhibit at the League of Nations pavilion, New York World's Fair 1939–40. UNAG, P150_01_027.

Intellectual cooperation in academic research

Already during its lifetime, the ICO and its constituent bodies gave rise to a few scholarly studies. Inevitably, these works were limited in scale – after all, the very subject that they examined was still evolving.[45] An initial attempt to cover the entire history of the League's ventures in intellectual cooperation occurred at the point of the IIIC's closure, from within the organization itself. Prefacing the product of these efforts, the Institute's last director, Jean-Jacques Mayoux, stressed that its staff had sought to write a history that was "as objective, as impartial, as critical as is possible", while acknowledging that the authors had been "workers attached to this past effort". Perhaps unsurprisingly, Mayoux's own verdict was positive: "if we consider the achievement in relation to the means, we are astonished that so much has been done from nothing, with nothing".[46] To him, any talk of "failure" seemed "abusive" as the organization "succeeded on its own scale".[47]

Further research on the ICIC, the IIIC and on related initiatives followed in the subsequent two decades. In 1953, F. S. Northedge – who later became a prominent scholar of international affairs – completed a doctoral thesis which, however, remained unpublished.[48] Two detailed studies appeared in 1962, based on, respectively, PhD theses at Princeton University and the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva.[49] It is fair to say, however, that these pioneering efforts did not spawn an avalanche of further research ventures.[50]

It was not until the 1990s that the contours of a broader field became visible. Two publications were significant in this respect. First, Akira Iriye's study on *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* placed intellectual cooperation efforts within a broader historical framework.[51] Approached in this way, the ICO and its constituent elements formed part of a wider story that involved various attempts to foster transnational cultural exchanges. Second, in the 1999, Jean-Jacques Renoliet's *L'Unesco oubliée* amounted to the first detailed publication on the League's work for intellectual cooperation in over a generation.[52]

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45 Hsu Fu Teh, "L'activité de la Société des Nations dans le domaine intellectuel" (PhD thesis, Université de Paris, 1929); Henri Galabert, *La Commission intellectuelle de la Société des Nations* (Toulouse: Imprimerie Toulousaine Lion et Fils, 1931); Charles André, *L'Organisation de coopération intellectuelle* (Rennes: Imprimerie Provinciale de l'Ouest, 1938).

46 Jean-Jacques Mayoux, 'Preface' in *L'Institut international de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1925–1946* (Paris: IIIC, 1946), 4. This project was led by Jacques Massoulier, head of the IIIC's Service of Publications, with the help of Bernard Monsour, who would later work for UNESCO.

47 Ibid., 5.

48 Frederick Samuel Northedge, "International Intellectual Co-operation Within the League of Nations: Its Conceptual Basis and Lessons for the Present" (PhD thesis, University of London, 1953).

49 Jan Kolasa, *International Intellectual Cooperation: The League Experience and the Beginnings of UNESCO* (Wroclaw: Zaklad Narodowy im. Ossolinskich, 1962); Thi-Tu Pham, *La Coopération intellectuelle sous la Société des Nations* (Geneva: Droz, 1962).

50 A doctoral thesis completed in 1978 was one of the rare exceptions: Stanley William Pycior, "'The Most Ineffectual Enterprise': The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations, 1922–1931" (PhD thesis, University of Notre Dame, 1978).

51 Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997).

52 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*. The extensive doctoral thesis – which comprises three volumes altogether – on which this book is based is Jean-Jacques Renoliet, "L'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle (1919–1940)" (PhD thesis, Université Paris I, 1995).

The revived interest in intellectual cooperation occurred within a broader historiographical context. The late 1990s and early 2000s were a period of a growing interest in global and transnational approaches to studying the past.[53] International organizations of different guises emerged as one way in which historians engaged with global themes or traced transnational interactions.[54] Crucially, these impulses transformed the League of Nations into an increasingly popular area of research. Rather than seeing the League in terms of what it did *not* achieve, scholars revisited aspects of the Geneva institution as a way of investigating broader patterns in twentieth-century history. By the mid-2000s, Susan Pedersen surveyed the growing literature on the League in a seminal review article that added further momentum to this development.[55] Since then, the historiography has expanded into manifold directions. For example, we now have detailed studies that cover different parts of the League system, including the International Labour Organization, the Economic and Financial Organization, the Mandates Section, the Information Section as well as the League's dismantling after the Second World War.[56] The United Nations Historical Series – in which the present volume appears – has contributed to this field, too.[57] Moreover, beyond studies with an institutional focus, a plethora of work has inscribed the League into wider histories of internationalism.[58]

[53] In the course of the 2010s, a range of articles and books took stock of the field that had emerged over the preceding two decades: Patricia Clavin, "Time, Manner, Place: Writing Modern European History in Global, Transnational and International Contexts", *European History Quarterly* 40, no. 4 (2010): 624–40; Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013); Akira Iriye, *Global and Transational History: The Past, Present, and Future* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013); Kiran Klaus Patel, "An Emperor without Clothes? The Debate about Transnational History Twenty-five Years On", *Histoire@Politique*, no. 26 (2015): 191–206; Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016); Fiona Paisley and Pamela Scully, *Writing Transnational History* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

[54] Akira Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002); Glenda Sluga, "Editorial: The Transnational History of International Institutions", *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 219–22; Sandrine Kott, "Les organisations internationales, terrains d'étude de la globalisation: jalons pour une approche socio-historique", *Critique Internationale*, no 52 (2011): 9–16.

[55] Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations", *The American Historical Review*, 112, no. 4 (2007): 1091–117.

[56] Jasmien Van Daele, Magaly Rodríguez Garcia, Geert Van Goethem and Marcel van der Linden, eds, *ILO Histories: Essays on the International Labour Organization and its Impact on the Twentieth Century* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010); Sandrine Kott and Joëlle Droux, eds, *Globalizing Social Rights: The International Labour Organization and Beyond (International Labour Organization* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013); Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920–1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Emil Eiby Seidenfaden, *Informing Interwar Internationalism: The Information Strategies of the League of Nations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024); Jane Mumby, *Dismantling the League of Nations: The Quiet Death of an International Organization, 1945–8* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024).

[57] Magaly Rodríguez Garcia, Davide Rodogno and Liat Kozma, eds, *The League of Nations' Work on Social Issues: Visions, Endeavours and Experiments* (Geneva: United Nations, 2016); Pierre-Etienne Bourneuf, *Genève, berceau de la Société des Nations* (Geneva: United Nations, 2022); Erik Koenen, ed., *Communicating the League of Nations: Contributions to a Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period* (Geneva: United Nations, 2024). The other League-related publication in this section is a historical edition, *Trafficking in Women (1924–1926): The Paul Kinsie Reports for the League of Nations*, 2 vols (Geneva: United Nations, 2017).

[58] On the League within histories of interwar internationalism, see Laqua, ed., *Internationalism Reconfigured*. For the League within histories of internationalism across a larger time frame, see Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*, 45–78; Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (London: Penguin, 2012), 116–53; Simon Jackson and Alanna O'Malley, eds, *The Institution of International Order: From the League of Nations to the UN* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018). On the League of Nations within the context of emerging international administrations, see Karen Gram-Skjoldager, Haakon Ikonomou and Torsten Kahlert, eds, *Organizing the 20th-Century World: International Organizations and the Emergence of International Public Administrations*, 1920s–1960s (London: Bloomsbury, 2022). See also Haakon Ikonomou and Karen Gram-Skholdager, eds, *The League of Nations: Perspectives from the Present* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2019).

Having said this, even at a time at a time of revived interest in the League, its activities in the field of intellectual cooperation at first appeared as somewhat peripheral to the overall story. For example, Susan Pedersen's review article described the League's "effort at intellectual cooperation [… as] more symbolically significant than effective".[59] Zara Steiner – whose magisterial study on the international history of the interwar period included a nuanced appraisal of the League – mentioned the IIIC in passing, noting its features as a "highly informal" venture that seemed to exemplify "a massive proliferation of new specialized bodies".[60] In 2007, Patricia Clavin acknowledged that the ICIC's "emphasis on the value of intellectual work to society […] offered valuable lessons", especially with regard to "selling the benefits of international cooperation to young people", but deemed it "insufficient to counter the potent political ideologies that came to dominate European history in the inter-war period". Seen in this way, "the League's contribution to European history lay in more concrete issues".[61]

At one level, it is difficult to contest these statements: interwar intellectual cooperation involved initiatives in a wide range of fields, but by comparison, relatively few of its results were both tangible *and* durable. However, this does not to make scholarly engagement with this phenomenon less important. Indeed, whereas the above quotes are from the early 2000s, there has been a groundswell of academic research on the League's work in intellectual cooperation since then. Some of this work has shed light on regional interactions, for example showing how Latin American participation in interwar internationalism partly went through the route of intellectual cooperation.[62] Other work has approached the subject by focusing on particular countries, ranging from the Netherlands to Japan.[63] By considering the involvement and representation of various regions and countries within the structures for intellectual cooperation, we can also explore a wider question, namely changes in the conceptualization of global order.[64]

Furthermore, precisely because intellectual cooperation involved such a broad array of actors, it can shed light on the League of Nations system more generally, including the interactions between the League and protagonists from civil society.[65] The importance of such contacts and exchanges also

[59] Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations", 1109.

[60] Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919–1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 368.

[61] Patricia Clavin, "Europe and the League of Nations", *Twisted Paths: Europe 1914–1945*, ed. Robert Gerwarth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 339.

[62] Corinne Pernet, "Les échanges d'informations entre intellectuels: la conférence comme outil de coopération intellectuelle à la Société des Nations", in "*Devant le verre d'eau": Regards croisés sur la conférence comme vecteur de la vie intellectuelle 1880–1950*, ed. François Vallotton and Alain Clavien (Lausanne: Editions Antipodes, 2007), 91–106; and the contributions by Corinne Pernet, Juliette Dumont and Letícia Pumar in *Beyond Geopolitics: New Histories of Latin America at the League of Nations*, ed. Alan McPherson and Yannick Wehrli (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2015).

[63] Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation"; Jan Eijking, "Brain Worlds: Information Order and Interwar Intellectual Cooperation", *European Journal of International Relations,* 31, no. 3 (2025): 509–36.

[64] Michael Riemens, *De passie voor vrede: de evolutie van de internationale politieke cultuur in de jaren 1880-1940* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 2005; Takashi Saikawa, "From Intellectual Co-Operation to International Cultural Exchange: Japan and China in the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations, 1922–1939" (PhD thesis, Universität Heidelberg, 2014).

[65] Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 439–46. For one example of civil society interactions, see for example work that focuses on musicians, musicologists and their organizations: Christiane Sibille, *"Harmony Must Dominate the World": Internationale Organisationen und Musik in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Bern: DDS, 2016), 125–61.

means that research on intellectual cooperation allows us to chart the development of different fields, from educational exchanges to the study of international relations.[66]

Altogether, then, research from the past two decades has shown that the ICO and related ventures can be significant objects of enquiry in that they make it possible to trace much wider developments in twentieth-century history. At one level, the present volume is the culmination of prior efforts to reappraise the League's work in the field of science and culture, a century after it developed designated structures for such activities.[67] Not only the individual contributions, but our select bibliography at the end of the book thus provide a useful guide to the state of present research on intellectual cooperation. At the same time, we also use the opportunity of this volume to push the literature further, in particular by adopting a perspective that is broad in both methodological and geographical terms.

The fourteen chapters of this book are clustered into three parts. Part A, "Fields of Action", discusses various areas in which the IIIC, the ICIC and related bodies were highly active. Subjects such as cultural heritage (*Annamaria Ducci*), the material conditions of intellectuals (*Gabriel Galvez-Behar*) and textbook reform (*Xavier Riondet*) all figured prominently on the agenda of these bodies. Moreover, *Elisabet Carbó-Catalan* highlights a particular duality: translation was an everyday practice in institutions such as the League of Nations, yet its bodies for intellectual cooperation also dealt with it from scholarly and methodological standpoints. Taken together, the four contributions do not simply focus on an institutional story but trace the field-defining nature of the work undertaken in expert committees, specialized offices and conference halls.

At first sight, the scope of Part B – "Working within the League System" – may seem more narrow, yet the chapters show that the League of Nations was not a closed system but defined by constant and wide-ranging interactions. This aspect is evident even in the two chapters that focus on staffing. *Jonathan Voges* shows that individuals' routes into the IIIC were highly diverse, with individuals whose past trajectories encompassed academia, administration politics and diplomacy. Meanwhile, in a rich and multilayered analysis of women at the IIIC and within the League of Nations more generally, *Diana Roig-Sanz and Rubén Rodríguez-Casañ* draw on a dataset that recognizes how the wider League system involved individuals from a wide range of external groups and organizations. *Thomas Davies*'s piece acknowledges this particular aspect by investigating the relationship between the IIIC, ICIC and various non-state actors. In doing so, he also relates work in the field of intellectual cooperation to the League's efforts to engage with external audiences. This subject is further developed in *Pelle van Dijk*'s chapter on links between intellectual cooperation and the League's Information Section. *Monika Šipelytė*'s case study on Gabrielle Radziwill connects to each of these four chapters: Radziwill was a woman working within the League of Nations

[66] On education, see Eckhardt Fuchs, "The Creation of New International Networks in Education: The League of Nations and Educational Organizations in the 1920s", *Paedagogica Historica* 43, no. 2 (2007): 199–209; Rita Hofstetter and Xavier Riondet, "International Institutions, Pacifism and the Attack on Warmongering Textbooks", in *Textbooks and War: Historical and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Eugenia Roldán Vera and Eckhardt Fuchs (Cham: Palgrave, 2018), 201–32; Kaiyi Li, *Transnational Education between The League of Nations and China* (Cham: Palgrave, 2021). On the study of international relations, see Pemberton, *The Story of International Relations*; and Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022).

[67] This book follows on from a centenary conference, held in Geneva in 2022, which featured constributions from a wide cast of scholars. Abstracts from the event are archived in Martin Grandjean, ed., *Centenary of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations* (Geneva: United Nations Library and Archives, 2022), available at https://intellectualcooperation.org/book-of-abstracts-2022 (last accessed 4 June 2025).

system, initially for the Information Section and later for the ICO. However, her career within the League system was facilitated by her longstanding links to international women's organizations. Moreover, questions of national representation also informed her work: as a Lithuanian, she hailed from a nation that had recently acquired independent statehood and was defining itself on the international stage.

The question of national representation is a particular concern in Part C, which is dedicated to a series of case studies on "External Relations" in the field of intellectual cooperation. *Johannes Feichtinger* takes us to the Habsburg Monarchy's successor states in Central Europe. He shows how the precarity of intellectual workers as well as contested questions relating to culture and identity shaped involvement in Austrian and Polish engagement with intellectual cooperation. Transnational intellectual cooperation as a conflictual terrain is also a central theme of *Anastassiya Schacht*'s chapter, which considers relations with "Russian" intellectuals, particularly at a time when the Soviet Union maintained a hostile stance vis-à-vis the League of Nations. A contrasting case is provided by *Benjamin Martin*, who shows how politicians and intellectuals from Fascist Italy embraced the opportunities provided by the League's growing involvement in cultural matters. The idea of using intellectual cooperation as a way of being present on the international stage also characterized efforts by the Republic of China during the 1930s, as traced in *Jennifer Chang*'s chapter on the Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale in Geneva as well as broader expert cooperation between the Kuomintang government and the League. The final chapter, by *Leondro Lacquaniti*, takes us to Buenos Aires. Focusing on two congresses in 1936 – the PEN congress and an *Entretien* organized by the IIIC – his chapter discusses representations of Argentine culture but also the wider politics of culture in the 1930s.

Taken together, these fourteen chapters tell a complex story. Clearly, intellectual cooperation at the League of Nations was amorphous and unwieldy, bringing together a range of actors with different concerns and agendas. These protagonists sat on different committees, often representing different institutions and adhering to different ideologies. However, their very presence around the large meeting tables of intellectual cooperation or at the offices in Geneva and Paris testifies to widespread concern for, and commitment to, cultural and scientific work in not only national but also international settings.

Part A

Fields of Action

1

The League of Nations and the Notion of Cultural Heritage:

Legacies and New Departures

Annamaria Ducci

From its inception, the League of Nations aimed to organize the new, delicate world order created by the Paris Peace Conference. In 1922, the formation of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) assigned intellectual relations a fundamental role in this mission.[1] These bodies conceived cross-cultural dialogue as an exchange between "civilizations".[2] The notion of cultural heritage played a central role in this context. From an initial phase that aimed to preserve European culture in general, the importance of artistic issues for building peace soon became a prominent concern.[3]

Since the early nineteenth century, heritage has been at the centre of national policies to forge "imagined communities" through the construction of traditions and collective memories.[4] War, destruction and loss are intrinsically linked to heritage. In modern Europe, heritage awareness increased in the course of the "long" nineteenth century, and was connected to a range of conflicts, from the violent upheavals of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars to the First World War.[5] A concern for peace gave rise to the idea that a universal cultural heritage exists, and that this should be preserved beyond national rivalries. One of the first occasions to discuss this concept was the International Congress for the Protection of Works of Art and Monuments, held in Paris as part of the *Exposition Universelle* of 1889 and in conjunction with the First Universal Peace Congress. On this occasion, the patriotic exaltation of national monuments was already associated with the aspiration for an international policy to defend a "heritage of humanity […] bequeathed by the

I want to thank the Deutsches Forum für Kunstgeschichte (German Forum for Art History) in Paris, where I began addressing this topic as a research fellow in 2021. I would also like to thank Alexandre Coutelle at the UNESCO Archives in Paris for his friendly support.

1 Jean-Jacques Renoliet, L'*UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999); Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018); Massimo Giuntella, *Cooperazione intellettuale ed educazione alla pace nell'Europa della Società delle Nazioni* (Padova: CEDAM, 2001); Ana Filipa Vrdoljak and Lynn Meskell, "Intellectual Cooperation: Organisation, UNESCO, and the Culture Conventions", in *The Oxford Handbook of International Cultural Heritage Law*, ed. Francesco Francioni and Ana Filipa Vrdoljak (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 13–39.

2 Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 223–47.

3 Tomás Irish, *Feeding the Mind: Humanitarianism and the Reconstruction of European Intellectual Life, 1919–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023).

4 Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991). See also Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales: Europe XVIIIe–XXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1999).

5 Nathalie Heinich, *La fabrique du patrimoine: De la cathédrale à la petite cuillère* (Paris: Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2009); Dominique Poulot, *Une histoire du patrimoine en Occident: XVIIIe–XXIe siècle. Du monument aux valeurs* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2006).

past to all present generations".[6] Between the two World Wars, the aspiration for peace and the preservation of artistic heritage appeared to be two sides of the same problem: namely the survival of Western civilization and, in particular, of European civilization.

The intellectual bodies of the League of Nations took on this task, attempting to define concepts and legal statutes, but also devoting themselves to concrete protection actions. Different political forces within the League – liberals and socialists – confronted each other on the issue of heritage in often heated debates, so that the boldest proposals were not always implemented. By reconstructing these exchanges, this chapter advances our understanding of how notions of cultural heritage developed over time, and how intellectual cooperation during the interwar period laid the foundations for modern theories and policies in this field.

The creation of the IIIC and IMO

Geneva delegated intellectual exchange to a dense network of bodies that came into being in the 1920s and, in 1931 formed the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (ICO). As Jean-Jacques Renoliet explains, the ICO maintained a "stateless" line, in order to preserve the character of collaboration that constituted its essence, even in moments of international tension: "the cooperation of intellectuals had to transcend the cooperation of states".[7]

At the same time, however, European states saw cultural exchanges as an opportunity to place themselves on the international chessboard, pursuing forms of "governmental internationalism".[8] This aspect was evident in the developments that preceded the ICO's formation. In January 1925, the Belgian socialist Jules Destrée, former Minister of Sciences and Arts (and a founding member of the ICIC), addressed the Belgian parliament with a long and heartfelt appeal that an International Institute of Artistic Cooperation be created in Brussels.[9] Destrée's proposal was unsuccessful. Instead, a year later, the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) started its activities at the Palais-Royal in Paris. The new executive body of the ICIC enjoyed strong support from the French government and the prime minister at the time, Édouard Herriot, leader of the *Cartel des Gauches*.[10] Conceived by Julien Luchaire, Inspector-General of Public Education and the IIIC's first Director, the Institute came into being through a national law passed in August 1925.[11] Its complex

[6] Speech by the president of the congress, Charles Normand, in *Congrès international pour la protection des œuvres d'art et des monuments tenu à Paris du 24 au 29 juin 1889: procès-verbaux sommaires* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1889), 13–14 and 25. See also Astrid Swenson, *The Rise of Heritage: Preserving the Past in France, Germany and England, 1789–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), especially 206–13.

[7] Jean-Jacques Renoliet, "L'UNESCO oubliée: L'Organisation de Coopération Intellectuelle (1921–1946)", in *60 ans d'histoire de l'Unesco: actes du colloque international, Paris, 16–18 novembre 2005*, ed. Jens Boël (Paris: UNESCO, 2007), 61–74, 62.

[8] Madeleine Herren, "Governmental Internationalism and the Beginning of a New World Order in the Late Nineteenth Century", in *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War*, ed. Martin H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 121–44.

[9] "Chambre des représentants. Annales parlementaires, Séance du mardi 20 janvier 1925", 369. The document features in the dossier "Coopération intellectuelle internationale – Communiqué par M. Destrée – Texte de l'interpellation de M. Destrée à la Chambre des Représentants de Belgique, le 20 janvier 1925 sur la coopération intellectuelle et sur l'opportunité de créer à Bruxelles un Institut international de coopération artistique", United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R1035/13C/41938/14297.

[10] Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique Internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 51–67. See also the extended version, Daniel Laqua, "Internationalism and Nationalism in the League of Nations' Work for Intellectual Cooperation", in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Cham: Palgrave, 2018), 59–85.

[11] Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 44–76; Grandjean, "Les réseaux", 351. For the French context, see Christine Manigand, *Les français au service de la Société des Nations* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2003).

legal status endowed it with relative autonomy from both the national government and the League; however, the latter had the power to control its initiatives.[12] IIIC actions were directed towards all aspects of knowledge, from libraries to archives to museums. The Enlightenment ideas that seemed to manifest themselves in such encyclopaedic ambitions were also reflected in the conviction that cultural matters should be managed by "experts", according to an elitist vision shared by most of the members of the League bodies for intellectual cooperation. Destrée was well aware of these notions and instead stressed the need to involve "the working masses".[13]

Socialists played a prominent role in the League and the networks that supported its work.[14] Such connections extended to the League's cultural activities. The French art historian Henri Focillon (1881–1943) was not only a member of the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters of the ICIC: he was also a member of the Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière (SFIO) and had been close to Jean Jaurès, who led the SFIO until his death in 1914.[15] Within the movement for *art social* at the beginning of the twentieth century, Focillon developed a democratic idea of the museum in which the public should be the protagonist.[16] Accordingly, he proposed the creation of the International Museums Office (IMO), which became a reality in July 1926. IMO was a branch of the ICIC; however, it was based at the IIIC in Paris. Until his death in 1936, Destrée served as the IMO's first president. From 1929 until the IMO's closure in 1946, the Greek diplomat Euripide Foundoukidis served first as its secretary and then as secretary-general.

The IMO brought together the most prominent art historians, museum curators and fine arts officials of the time, almost all of them European.[17] As Pierre Leveau has noted, the League established the "paradigm of conservation", since this topic was addressed for the first time on both an international and institutional level.[18] Nurturing a lively dialogue between the member states, the Office tried to harmonize the experiences and competencies that each country had individually developed in the field of heritage and museums.[19] To further this programme, the official magazine *Mouseion*

12 In addition to Renoliet, *L'UNESCO Oubliée*, see Corinne A. Pernet, "Twists, Turns and Dead Alleys: The League of Nations and Intellectual Cooperation in Times of War", *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 3 (2014): 342–58; Brigitte Schroeder-Gudehus, *Les scientifiques et la paix: La communauté scientifique internationale au cours des années 20* (Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2014), 161–75.

13 As quoted in Geneviève Duchenne, *Esquisses d'une Europe nouvelle: L'européisme dans la Belgique de l'entre-deux-guerres (1919–1939)* (Brussels: PIE – Peter Lang 2008), 74.

14 Jean-Michel Guieu, *Le rameau et le glaive: Les militants français pour la Société des Nations* (Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2008).

15 Annamaria Ducci, *Henri Focillon en son temps: La liberté des formes* (Strasbourg: PUS, 2021).

16 Annamaria Ducci, "Focillon e il museo, nel contesto", in *Musei in Europa negli anni tra le due guerre: la conferenza di Madrid del 1934: un dibattito internazionale*, ed. Elena Della Piana, Maria Beatrice Failla and Franca Varallo (Genova: SAGEP, 2022), 75–95.

17 On the IMO, see Hiroshi Daifuku, "Museums and Monuments: UNESCO's Pioneering Role", *Museum International* 50, no. 1 (1998): 5–50; Annamaria Ducci, "'Mouseion', una rivista al servizio del patrimonio artistico europeo (1927–1946)", in *Annali di critica d'arte*, no. 1 (2005): 287–314; Marie Caillot, "La revue Mouseion (1927–1946): les musées et la coopération culturelle internationale" (PhD thesis, École nationale des Chartes, Paris, 2011); Annamaria Ducci, "Europe and the Artistic Patrimony of the Interwar Period: The International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations", in *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917–1957*, ed. Matthew D'Auria and Mark Hewitson (New York: Berghahn, 2012), 227–42; Silvia Cecchini, "Musei e mostre d'arte negli anni Trenta: l'Italia e la cooperazione intellettuale", in *Snodi di critica: Musei, mostre, restauro e diagnostica artistica in Italia 1930–1940*, ed. Maria Ida Catalano (Rome: Gangemi editore, 2013), 57–105; Pierre Leveau, *L'institution de la conservation du patrimoine culturel dans l'entre-deux-guerres* (Dijon: Office de coopération et d'information muséales, 2017); Melania Savino, "Creating the Idea of the Museum through the Pages of the Journal 'Mouseion'", in *Images of the Art Museum: Connecting Gaze and Discourse in the History of Museology*, ed. Eva-Maria Troelenberg and Melania Savino (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017): 111–31.

18 Leveau, *L'institution*, 15.

19 "Programme de l'Office international des musées (Première réunion d'experts, Genève, 13 et 14 janvier 1927)", *Mouseion*, 1 (1927): 11–16.

was created as a tool for professionals in the field. Initially, the IMO organized surveys dedicated to specific themes and instituted various initiatives, exhibitions and congresses.[20] In the 1930s, the IMO launched an intense season of international conferences dedicated to conservation, restoration and museography.[21] As a well-established format for scholarly cooperation, such conferences allow us to recognize the making of an "epistemic community" on museums and heritage.[22]

One notable conference in the field of cultural heritage was dedicated to the preservation of monuments and took place in Athens in October 1931 at the suggestion of the Italian National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. Up to that point, the IMO had aimed at pursuing immediately realizable results,[23] in line with the pragmatic attitude of the IIIC and ICIC.[24] Instead, the Athens Conference also addressed the issue of monuments conservation from a general point of view. In particular, it ratified the specific notion of a "heritage of humankind" that had appeared in debates in previous decades, well before the IMO's creation. In order to trace the history of the idea of heritage in the context of the League, it is necessary to move from Paris to Geneva, back to the ICIC initiatives that laid the foundations of intellectual cooperation.[25]

The idea of *patrimoine* at the League of Nations before the Athens Conference

It is important to note that French was adopted almost exclusively within the League's cultural bodies and their official documents, with only summaries being provided in other languages.[26] This choice led to the preferential use of *patrimoine* over the English word "heritage".[27] The meanings of these two terms do not perfectly coincide. The French *patrimoine*, from the Latin *patrimonium*

[20] Leveau, *L'institution*, 69–188; Ducci, "Mouseion"; Ducci, "Europe and the Artistic Patrimony".

[21] Conférence Internationale pour l'étude des méthodes scientifiques appliquées à l'examen et à la conservation des œuvres d'art (Rome 1930); Conférence internationale de muséographie (Madrid 1934); Conférence internationale des Fouilles (Cairo 1937). See Leveau, *L'institution*, 191–209.

[22] On conferences and congresses, see Martin Grandjean and Marco van Leeuwen, "Mapping Internationalism: Congresses and Organizations in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries", in *International Organizations and Global Civil Society: Histories of the Union of International Associations*, ed. Daniel Laqua, Wouter van Acker and Christophe Verbruggen (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 225–42; Corinne Pernet, "Les échanges d'informations entre intellectuels: la conférence comme outil de coopération intellectuelle à la Société des Nations", in *Devant le verre d'eau: regards croisés sur la conférence comme vecteur de la vie intellectuelle 1880–1950*, ed. François Vallotton (Lausanne: Editions Antipodea, 2006), 1–10; Stephen Legg, Mike Heffernan, Jake Hodder and Benjamin Thorpe, eds, *Placing Internationalism: International Conferences and the Making of the Modern World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022); Charlotte Bigg, Jessica Reinisch, Geert Somsen and Sven Widmalm, "The Art of Gathering: Histories of International Scientific Conferences", *The British Journal for the History of Science* 56, no. 4 (2023): 423–33. On epistemic communities, see Peter M. Haas, "Introduction: Epistemic Community and International Policy Coordination", *International Organization* 46, no. 1 (1992): 1–35.

[23] "International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation: Eighth Plenary Session. Report of the Committee submitted to the Council and the Assembly, 1926-08-16", UNAG, A-28-1926-XII_EN.

[24] Jo-Anne Pemberton, "Vers une société des Esprits: De la Commission Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle à l'UNESCO", in Boel, *60 ans d'histoire*, 67–75, 68.

[25] Martin Grandjean, "The Paris/Geneva Divide: A Network Analysis of the Archives of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations", in *Culture as Soft Power: Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy*, ed. Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Diana Roig-Sanz (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 65–98, 66.

[26] Carolyn N. Biltoft, *A Violent Peace: Media, Truth, and Power at the League of Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021).

[27] Things changed with the Anglo-American shift in UNESCO, starting from 1945. See André Desvallées and François Mairesse and Bernard Deloche, "Patrimoine", in *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie*, ed. André Desvallées and François Mairesse (Paris: Armand Colin, 2011), 421–52, 431; Nabila Oulebsir and Astrid Swenson, "Patrimoine: Voyages des mots. Heritage, Erbe, Beni culturali, Turâth, Tigemmi", *Patrimoine et Architecture* 21–22,(2015): 10–23; Mathieu Dormaels, "The Concept behind the Word: Translation Issues in Definitions of Heritage", in *Understanding Heritage: Perspectives in Heritage Studies*, ed. Marie-Thérèse Albert, Roland Bernecker and Britta Rudolff (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 107–15.

(formed from *pater* = father, and *munus* = gift, but also task, duty), rather than the idea of an automatic historical inheritance, insists on the responsible act of transmission, conceived as an ethical duty that generations must assume. Moreover, since *munus* is at the origin of the term *communitas* (*cum* and *munus*), that duty can only be collective and public; this implies limited freedom for individuals, bound together by a higher obligation.[28] It is precisely in this ideal sense that the word *patrimoine* entered into the spirit of Geneva: the League was thus the guarantor of the preservation of a "common good", understood first and foremost in ethical terms, rather than as legal, property-related question.

The First World War had shown the vulnerability of Western civilizations and naturally engendered a sense of loss among nations.[29] In 1919, the International Charter of Intellectual and Moral Interests by the Union of International Associations defined the League of Nations as the "warden of heritage" (*gardienne du patrimoine*).[30] In his *L'organisation du travail intellectuel* (1921), the first president of the League Council, Léon Bourgeois, spoke of a "common treasure of knowledge" (*trésor commun des connaissances*).[31] Julien Luchaire, prefiguring the birth of the IIIC, traced back to an "old French tradition" the ability to harmonize all intellectual efforts, in order to "transform them into part of the common heritage of humanity".[32] These words were echoed at the inauguration of the Parisian Institute when the then president of the League Council, the Italian Vittorio Scialoja, argued that variegated cultural wealth would contribute "to humanity's common heritage" (*patrimoine commun de l'humanité*).[33] At the origin of intellectual cooperation, therefore, common heritage was conceived as a trove of talents, in a sense akin to what Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz had defined in 1690 as the "patrimony of humankind" (*hoc pretiosissimum humanis generis patrimonium quod in mentis opibus consistit*).[34]

However, within the League, we can also find a very early use of the term *patrimoine* in its specific artistic sense. The Treaty of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, signed in September 1919, contained the Covenant of the League of Nations; in article 196, "all objects of artistic, archaeological, scientific or historic character" were defined as "intellectual patrimony".[35] The concern for the preservation of monuments was evident from the very first actions of the ICIC. One of its members, the Italian jurist Francesco Ruffini, an anti-fascist and pacifist liberal,[36] drafted a report in July 1923 in which he proposed an international management of archaeology, from excavation methods to laws for the protection of artefacts, in order to achieve "the realisation of the most complete international

28 Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, transl. Timonthy C. Caampbell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009).

29 See, for example, Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

30 Grandjean, "Les reseaux", 119.

31 Léon Bourgeois, *Organisation of Intellectual Work: Report by M. Léon Bourgeois, French representative, adopted by the Council on September 2nd, 1921* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1921).

32 Julien Luchaire, "Note sur le rôle du nouveau comité national français de coopération intellectuelle" (1924), as cited in Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 39–40.

33 Grandjean, "Les réseaux", 362.

34 Françoise Waquet, "Le savoir comme patrimoine du genre humain", in *L'esprit des lieux: Le patrimoine et la cité*, ed. Daniel J. Grange and Dominique Poulot (Grenoble: Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 1997), 37–45.

35 Peter Haslinger, "Saint-Germain, Treaty of", *International Enyclopedia of the First World War*, available at https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/saint-germain_treaty_of (last accessed 31 January 2025).

36 Andrea Frangioni, *Francesco Ruffini: Una biografia intellettuale* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2017).

solidarity in every domain of culture".[37] Indeed, the principle of *solidarité* guided the entire scaffolding of Ruffini's project. In these very early years, the notion of heritage was entwined with that of solidarity, the idea promoted by Bourgeois as a cardinal principle of the League.[38]

In the artistic sense, the term "heritage" appeared a few years later within the IIIC. In 1927, Jules Destrée promoted an enquiry within the Artistic Relations and Legal Sections of the Parisian Institute, devoted to studying the protection of the "beauties of nature" (*beautés de la nature*). The resulting report (1928) read:

> Most civilized peoples have considered it their duty to safeguard the aesthetic creations bequeathed to them by their ancestors, to conserve the landscapes that have played a part in their history or that give their land a special value, and to protect the plant and animal species whose disappearance would deprive the country of some of its special features. In addition, international congresses have endeavoured to determine the most useful methods for ensuring the conservation of the *aesthetic heritage of humanity*.[39]

This was likely the first time the expression *patrimoine de l'humanité* appeared in an IIIC document. However, it is important to note that at its origin, the proposal came from an ICIC member who was not French but Belgian and, significantly, this term was used in an alternative sense to that of natural heritage. In Belgium, Destrée had vigorously promoted the law on the conservation of the beauty of the landscape (1911) which affirmed the principle of a "new concept of common property" (*conception nouvelle d'une propriété commune*), to the detriment of the private one.[40]

Destrée's ideas, like Focillon's, were based on the notion of "common good" that appeared with the French Revolution, together with the recognition of the public value of monuments. The republican notion of *patrimoine* then emerged, understood as the moral binder of the nation, albeit accorded a universal value.[41] Destrée, who was a member of parliament for the Belgian Workers Party and served as Belgian Minister of Sciences and Arts from 1919 to 1921, was a leading figure in League's intellectual network.[42] A self-taught art critic by the end of the nineteenth century, he directly connected the theme of art with that of democracy, not only in the sense of public access

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37 Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, Minutes of the Second Session, Seventh Meeting, "Report by M. Ruffini on the subject of International Agreement for Archaeological Research and the Publication of the results achieved by such research", 1 September 1923, 28–9, UNAG, C-570-M-224-1923-XII_EN. The meeting was held on 30 July 1923.

38 Serge Berstein, "Léon Bourgeois et le solidarisme", in *Léon Bourgeois: du solidarisme à la Société des Nations*, ed. Alexandre Niess and Maurice Vaïsse (Langres: Éditions Dominique Guéniot, 2006), 7–16; Olivier Amiel, "Le solidarisme, une doctrine juridique et politique française de Léon Bourgeois à la Ve République", *Parlement[s], Revue d'histoire politique* 1, no. 11 (2009): 149–60.

39 "Rapport présenté par la Section des relations artistiques et le Service juridique à la Sous-commission des lettres et des arts sur la protection des beautés naturelles", 2 as included in "Protection of Natural Beauty Spots – Discussion at the 5th session, July 1928 of the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters of the C.I.C.I.", 2, UNAG R2237/5B/5189/5189.

40 Marie-Sophie de Clippele, *Protéger le patrimoine culturel: à qui incombe la charge?* (Brussels: Presses de l'Université Saint-Louis, 2020), 104–26.

41 André Chastel and Jean-Pierre Babelon, *La notion de patrimoine* (Paris: Levi, 1994), 58; Dominique Poulot, "Le patrimoine universel: Modèle culturel français", *Revue d'Histoire moderne et contemporaine* 39, no. 1 (1992): 29–55, 37–8; Françoise Choay, *L'allégorie du patrimoine* (Paris: Seuil, 1999), 73–92; Dominique Poulot, *Musée, nation, patrimoine, 1789–1815* (Paris: Gallimard, 1997).

42 Euripide Foundoukidis, "L'œuvre internationale de Jules Destrée dans le domaine des arts", *Mouseion*, 33–34 (1936): 7–16; Jean Tordeur, *Jules Destrée le multiple* (Brussels: Académie Royale de Langue et de Littérature Françaises, 1995); Geneviève Duchenne, "La pensée européenne du socialiste Jules Destrée: Un internationalisme européen", A*nnales d'études européennes de l'Université catholique de Louvain* 5, (2001): 21–45.

to art but in the more daring sense of a "revolutionary" project in which education, culture and art would foster the consciousness of the lower social classes.[43] Adopting the theories of the French jurist, intellectual and socialist politician Edmond Picard, Destrée argued that it was necessary "to make available to everyone, even the most humble, the treasures now reserved for a minority, a so-called elite of the rich".[44] In his vision, the very concept of property was being overturned, shifting from the level of a real possession to that of an intellectual appropriation: "a work of art is owned far more by the person who understands it than by the person who pays for it!"[45] For the internationalist and pacifist Destrée, art was the most effective means of achieving understanding between peoples, because images spoke a "universal" language that would overcome nationalisms.

"The new concept that has been emerging for some time"

Returning to the IMO, one can observe that, before 1931, the term commonly used was not *patrimoine* but *monuments*. The word referred back to the history of policies adopted in France by the July Monarchy during the 1830s, when the new role of inspector was created, entrusted with the inventory and protection of the *monuments historiques*.[46] Adopting such a lexical choice, the IMO members implicitly revealed their desire to constitute themselves as a specialized and very sectorial community of experts. Instead, the broader term *patrimoine* came to the fore with the Athens Conference.[47] Not initially foreseen in the conference name,[48] the term was introduced in a number of speeches and flowed into the final resolutions, often used in association with the controversial notion of "civilization".[49]

Presenting the Athens Conference in a radio address, the Greek-born and French-trained IMO Secretary-General, Euripide Foundoukidis,[50] explained that one of the problems to be discussed in Athens would be the management of certain monuments that could be considered universal:

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43 Jules Destrée, *Art et socialisme* (Brussels: Bibliothèque de propagande socialiste, 1896), 29.

44 "Séance du 28 mai 1896", in Jules Destrée, *Discours parlementaires* (Brussels: Henri Lamertin, 1914), 554–69, 555.

45 Jules Destrée, *Préoccupations Intellectuelles, Esthétiques et Morales du Parti Socialiste Belge*, 1897, as cited in Tordeur, *Jules Destrée*, 125.

46 Choay, *L'allégorie du patrimoine*, 93–129; Arlette Auduc, *Quand les monuments construisaient la nation: le service des monuments historiques de 1830 à 1940* (Paris: Comité d'histoire du ministère de la Culture, 2008).

47 See Desvallès, "À l'origine du mot patrimoine"; André Desvallès, "De la notion privée d'héritage matériel au concept universel et extensif de patrimoine: retour sur l'histoire et sur quelques ambiguïtés sémantiques", in *Médias et patrimoine: le rôle et l'influence des médias dans la production d'une mémoire collective*, ed. Martine Cardin (Québec: Institut sur le patrimoine culturel et Chaire UNESCO en patrimoine culturel, 2003), 19–36; Michela Passini, "Le patrimoine à l'épreuve de l'histoire transnationale: circulations culturelles et évolutions du régime patrimonial pendant les années 1930", *Vingtième Siècle* 137, no. 1 (2018): 49–61; Michela Passini, "La Conférence d'Athènes sur la conservation des monuments d'art et d'histoire (1931) et l'élaboration croisée de la notion de patrimoine de l'humanité", in *Le double voyage: Paris-Athènes (1919–1939)*, ed. Lucile Arnoux-Farnoux and Polina Kosmadaki (Athens: École française d'Athènes, 2020), 243–52; Marcos Olender, "'The Abyss of History is Deep Enough to Hold Us All': The Beginnings of the 1931 Athens Charter and the Proposition of the Notion of World Heritage", in *International Relations and Heritage: Patchwork in Times of Plurality*, ed. Rodrigo Christofoletti and Maria Leonor Botelho (Cham: Palgrave, 2021): 129–50; Susanna Caccia Gherardini, "Patrimoine collectif des Nations / Patrimoine commun de l'Humanité: At the Origins of the Debate on the Conservation of World Heritage", *Restauro Archeologico* 30, no. 1 (2023): 30–5.

48 "L'activité de l'Office international des musées", *Mouseion* 11 (1930): 187 and 189.

49 Dominique Poulot, "Le patrimoine et les aventures de la modernité", in *Patrimoine et modernité*, ed. Dominique Poulot (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1998), 7–67, 10.

50 Jan Stöckmann, "Foundoukidis, Euripide" (2015), available at https://atom.archives.unesco.org/foundoukidis-euripide (last accessed 31 January 2025); Caillot, *La revue Mouseion*, 190–2.

> Certain problems of an international character could also become the object of an exchange of views at the Conference. Thus, for example, the new concept which has been emerging for some time and which tends to consider certain monuments of art as belonging to the common heritage of humankind. This seems to be a new principle of international law in the field of art, the scope of which the future conference may be called upon to define.[51]

But what previous formulations of this "new concept" was the IMO Secretary-General referring to? By their very nature, the League's intellectual bodies had a special connection with the university world: for example, during the 12th International Congress of Art History in Brussels in September 1930, the International Committee of Art History (Comité international d'histoire de l'art) was created, two members of which belonged to the ICIC.[52]

Nearly a decade earlier, another International Congress of Art History – organized in Paris by the Society for French Art History (Société d'histoire de l'art français) in 1921 – had raised the question of a universal heritage that would be regulated through international standards. In full solidarist spirit, the congress president and French art historian André Michel addressed the participants: "it is indeed a work of peace, harmony and friendship that we wanted to attempt in communion with those who have dedicated themselves to the study and care of the highest part of the common heritage of humanity".[53] Henri Focillon also participated in the 1921 congress, with a speech recalling the value of the "men of the [French] Revolution", who had laid down the principle that "art was everyone's heritage, [that] it should be used to educate the nation and become a high social passion".[54] Furthermore, the Italian Alfredo Fabrizi proposed an "International Entente for the Defence of Artistic Monuments", in the conviction that "not only the countries which possess them materially, but all civilized countries are interested in the protection of monuments of art", since "artistic monuments [...] belong to all humankind".[55] Fabrizi was a jurist, so he was well aware that in heritage issues, it was, first and foremost, a matter of reconciling the universalist principle with the legal statutes of private and national property. The 1921 congress, therefore, clearly expressed the urgency of a shared reflection. The League's intellectuals could not fail to feel themselves called upon; moreover, Destrée attended the congress as president of the Belgian Committee of Honour. In 1926, the IIIC was concerned about writing a report on the resolutions of the Paris Congress, vowing to carry forward its demands.[56]

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51 Euripide Foundoukidis, "La protection et la conservation des monuments d'art et d'histoire", *Mouseion* 15, no. 3 (1931): 94–7, 97. On the importance accorded by the IMO to radio broadcasting, see Euripide Foundoukidis, "La propagande pour les musées et la T.S.F. (communication présentée au Congrès International d'Histoire de l'Art, Bruxelles)", *Mouseion*, 13–14 (1931): 136–9.

52 *Actes du XIIe Congrès international d'Histoire de l'Art, Bruxelles 20–29 Septembre 1930*, vol. 1 (Brussels: Musées royaux des beaux-arts de Belgique, 1930), 251 and 263. See Heinrich Dilly, "Trouvailles: Images latentes du congrès international d'histoire de l'art", *Revue germanique internationale* 12, (2010), 105–22; Jennifer Cooke, "La riflessione sui musei nei congressi internazionali di storia dell'arte", in Della Piana et al., *Musei in Europa negli anni tra le due guerre*, 61–74.

53 "Discours de M. André Michel, Président du Congrès", in *Congrès d'histoire de l'art organisé par la Société de l'histoire de l'art français (Paris, 26 septembre – 5 octobre 1921)*: *Compte-rendu analytique* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1922), 128–9.

54 Henri Focillon, "La conception moderne des musées", in *Actes du Congrès d'Histoire de l'Art (Paris 26 septembre – 5 octobre 1921)*, vol. 1 (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1923), 85–94, 86.

55 Alfredo Fabrizi, "Entente internationale pour la défense des monuments d'art", in *Actes du XIIe Congrès international d'Histoire de l'Art*, 220–6, 220. See Leveau, *L'institution*, 150.

56 Leveau, *L'institution*, 149–53.

One of the first concerns of the Athens Conference of 1931 was therefore to carry out a comparative examination of national laws that were being established in Europe in those very years – for example in France, the law of 31 December 1913, which came into force in 1924 and in Belgium, the "Loi sur la conservation des monuments et des sites" of 1931.[57]

The Athens Conference (1931) and the debate on cultural heritage

Held in Athens in October 1931, the "Conference to examine issues relating to the protection and conservation of art and history monuments" brought together about one hundred experts from various fields – architects, art historians, archaeologists, museum curators and jurists – to draw up principles and techniques of modern monument conservation.[58] The IMO's preparatory meetings emphasized that this "meeting of experts" was to come up with more general "conclusions of principle", which should serve as a guide for the authorities of the various countries.[59] Jules Destrée (Figure 1.1), who presided over the conference, was particularly interested in the legal aspects:

> It is the duty of the Conference to (usefully) express its opinion on this new concept of a right, as yet ill-defined, of community control over private property [...] The task of ensuring this is entrusted to the public authorities. However, they are not always active and Mr. DESTREE believes that if these authorities are not stimulated, they may have all the rights, but in practice it will be a 'dead letter' and he asks the Conference to support the rights of the authority with regard to private property.[60]

Collaboration between states, in view of an international order, was therefore essential. The Belgian Jean Capart addressed this point.[61] Egyptologist and director of the Royal Museums of Art and History from 1926, Capart was one of the leading IMO figures in the 1930s and a staunch defender of the social role of the museum.[62] Starting with the exemplary case of the Egyptian site of Philae, Capart talked about the ancient civilizations, both Western and non-Western, "the conservation of which is of international interest […] a universal interest", to conclude: "Humanity as a whole has become accustomed, or will become accustomed, to considering such works as belonging to the collective heritage of civilized nations [...] The positive effects of cooperation of this kind, inspired

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57 Jean-Michel Leniaud, *Les archipels du passé: le patrimoine et son histoire* (Paris: Fayard, 2002), 238–41; de Clippele, *Protéger le patrimoine culturel*.

58 *La Conférence d'Athènes sur la conservation artistique et historique des monuments* (1931), ed. Françoise Choay (Paris: Linteau, 2012); Leveau, L'institution, 245–57; Patrizia Dragoni, "From Athens to New York via Madrid: The Consequences of 1931 Congress on the Cultural and Museum Policies Pursued by the Office International des Musées", *ARTisON*, no. 12 (2022): 47–58; Susanna Caccia Gherardini, *Indagine sulla conferenza di Atene (1931): Enquête sur la conférence d'Athènes (1931)* (Milano: Franco Angeli, 2024).

59 "Office international des musées. Réunion du Comité de Direction", *Bulletin de la Coopération intellectuelle. Société des Nations. Institut international de la coopération intellectuelle*, 1 (1931): 176.

60 "Conférence internationale d'experts pour l'étude des problèmes relatifs à la protection et à la conservation des monuments d'art et d'histoire, Athènes octobre 1931: Procès-Verbaux, International Museums Office, 1932", 8–9, UNESCO Archives, FR PUNES AG 01-IICI-OIM-O.I.M.4.

61 Capart did not directly participate in the Athens Conference, but sent his text to Destrée, asking him to read it. See "Liste des participants. Conférence en vue d'étudier les problèmes relatifs à la protection et à la conservation des monuments d'art et d'histoire, Athènes du 21 au 30 octobre 1931. [OIM 10(1). 1931]", UNAG, R2216/5B/31559/788.

62 François Mairesse, "Jean Capart 1877 (Bruxelles) – 1947 (Etterbeek)", in *Histoire de la muséologie: Quelques figures marquantes du monde muséal francophone*, ed. François Mairesse (Paris: ICOFOM, 2020), 131–47; Patrizia Dragoni, "Accessible à tous: La rivista 'Mouseion' per la promozione del ruolo sociale del museo", *Il Capitale Culturale: Studies on the Value of Cultural Heritage*, no. 11 (2015): 149–221.

Figure 1.1:
Jules Destrée (centre) at the foot of the Erechtheion, during the IMO's Athens conference of October 1931. *Source*: Archives de la Ville et du CPAS de Charleroi, Fonds Musée Destrée.

solely by a spirit of international solidarity, cannot be underestimated."[63] Still, in 1931, the League's principle of solidarity guided the practice of cooperation.

It should be noted that at the time Greece, due to the richness of its archaeological heritage and the mutilation of the Parthenon marbles,[64] was the European country with the strictest legislation on the protection of antiquities, as reflected in its law "On Antiquities" of 1899.[65] At the conference, the architect Paul Saintenoy, a member of the Brussels Commission of Monuments and Sites, proposed to "see the monuments of the Acropolis as a kind of international monument". In response, his Greek colleague Nikolaos Balanos pointed out that for the restoration works that had become necessary after the 1894 earthquake, the national government had called upon an "international committee" of experts.[66] Destrée hailed this initiative as "the magnificent example set by the Greek Government to the whole world in not claiming to be the selfish owner of this masterpiece, from which all humanity has benefited".[67] In his final report, he urged to counter "an abuse of national property" through international management based on "international solidarity" and the spirit of "mutual support". Furthermore, expressing cosmopolitan notions, he affirmed the duty to preserve "the vestiges of the past, whatever civilization or period they belong to".[68] The principle that the conservation choices of an individual nation could and should also be debated by foreign countries, in particularly outstanding cases, was thus affirmed. With the elaboration of a shared deontology in heritage management, Athens 1931 marked a crucial epistemological turn in the field of heritage policy, inaugurating its modern history.

The conference conclusions, however, revealed a hesitation in addressing the crux of the debate: the compromise, on a concrete level, between universalist ideas and the cornerstones of liberalism that were the basis of the League of Nations – namely national sovereignty and individual property. The so-called "Athens Charter" – comprising the resolutions adopted at the conference – stated the belief "that the question of the conservation of the artistic and archaeological property of mankind is one that interests the community of the States, which are wardens of civilisation" and expressed its hope "that the States, acting in the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations" would "collaborate with each other on an ever-increasing scale and in a more concrete manner with a view to furthering the preservation of artistic and historic monuments".[69] These principles informed the draft of an "International Convention for the Protection of Historic Buildings and Works of Art in Time of War", which was drawn up by the IMO under the supervision of the ICIC between 1937 and 1938. The outbreak of war prevented the adoption of this document, but the efforts did generate a significant issue

63 Jean Capart, "La conservation des monuments et la nécessité d'une collaboration internationale: L'exemple de Philae", *Mouseion* 19 (1932): 141–7, 141–3.

64 Passini, "Le patrimoine"; Passini, "La Conférence d'Athènes".

65 Daphne Voudori, "Greek Legislation Concerning the International Movement of Antiquities and its Ideological and Political Dimensions", *Mouseio Benaki*, 3rd suppl. (2008): 125–39.

66 "Conférence internationale d'experts pour l'étude des problèmes relatifs", 13.

67 Ibid., 14.

68 *Les Dossiers de l'Office International des Musées: La Conservation des monuments d'art et d'histoire / The Conservation of Artistic and Historical Monuments* (Paris: Société des Nations / IIIC, 1933), 10–12.

69 Article VII of the Athens Charter, available at https://www.icomos.org/en/167-the-athens-charter-for-the-restoration-ofhistoric-monuments (last accessed 3 March 2025); and *Les Dossiers de l'Office international des musées*, 20–1. The ICIC accepted the conclusions through its resolution of 23 July 1932: "L'activité de l'Office International des Musées en 1931–1932", *Mouseion*, 21/22 (1933): 274–6.

of *Mouseion*, a veritable "handbook" later widely used during the Second World War.[70] However, since the Athens meeting, times had changed dramatically. The Spanish Civil War made officials aware of the fragility of the monumental and artistic heritage under the blows of increasingly powerful armaments, which also increasingly revealed the weaknesses of the Geneva organization.[71]

In cultural heritage, the action of the ICIC and IMO was by no means "symbolic".[72] Not only did these bodies produce formal recommendations, but they allowed heritage to become a cultural, rather than a strictly legal, issue, moving "from the concept of physical possession to that of moral appropriation".[73] In the process, the thoughts elaborated within the League succeeded in overcoming the rift represented by the Second World War and flowed into the modern policies of UNESCO,[74] sealed in 1972 by the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.[75]

[70] "Preliminary Draft International Convention for the Protection of Historic Buildings and Works of Art in Time of War", *Mouseion*, 47–48 (1939): 181–201. See Leveau, *L'institution*, 285–91, and notably Patrizia Dragoni, "L'attività dell'Office International des Musées e della rivista 'Mouseion' per la protezione del patrimonio artistico in caso di conflitto armato", in *La protezione del patrimonio storico-artistico marchigiano e umbro durante la seconda guerra mondiale*, ed. Patrizia Dragoni and Caterina Paparello (Florence: Edifir, 2015), 17–37.

[71] *Le patrimoine culturel, cible des conflits armés: de la guerre civile espagnole aux guerres du XXIe siècle*, ed. Vincent Négri (Brussels: Bruylant, 2014), 3–63; Leveau, *L'institution*, 270–85.

[72] As suggested, for instance, by Susan Pedersen, "Back to the League of Nations", *The American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (2007): 1091–117, 1109.

[73] Desvallées and Mairesse, "Patrimoine", 437.

[74] Jo-Anne Pemberton, "The Changing Shape of Intellectual Cooperation: From the League of Nations to UNESCO", *Australian Journal of Politics & History* 58, no. 1 (2012): 34–50; Isabelle Anatole-Gabriel, *La fabrique du patrimoine de l'humanité: L'Unesco et la protection patrimoniale (1945–1992)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne / Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'Homme, 2016).

[75] "Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage", available at https://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/ (last accessed 31 January 2025). See Lynn Meskell, *A Future in Ruins: UNESCO, World Heritage and the Dream of Peace* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 1–27.

2

The Language and Translation Policies of Intellectual Cooperation:

Practical Needs and Symbolic Battles

Elisabet Carbó-Catalan

The Paris Peace Conference and the League of Nations constituted two key settings in which the "battle of languages" played out during the interwar period, marking the end of French linguistic hegemony and the emergence of English as an international lingua franca.[1] Considering the instrumental and constitutive functions of language, this chapter examines the language and translation policies adopted by the League bodies specializing in intellectual cooperation.[2] Their aim was to promote international relations in the intellectual domain with the ultimate purpose of securing peace and, as it was often described by contemporaries, reach "mutual understanding" in the field of international relations.[3] This chapter examines the concrete ways through which this "mutual understanding" was pursued.

The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) and National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation dealt with language and translation in several respects. At one level, both elements were key in their internal and external communication strategies. Similarities naturally existed in the ways these entities dealt with language diversity, given that they followed guidelines emanating from the League. That said, the tasks and composition of each body created specific translation needs, meaning that an examination of differing approaches to languages and translation can shed light on the machinery of intellectual cooperation as both an organizational network and as a group of organizations working with relative autonomy. On another level, however, translation was also an instrumental activity for

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1 Jesús Baigorri–Jalón, *From Paris to Nuremberg: The Birth of Conference Interpreting* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2014), 20–7.

2 Charles Taylor, *The Language Animal: The Full Shape of the Human Linguistic Capacity* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2016); Helder De Schutter, "Language Policy and Political Philosophy: On the Emerging Linguistic Justice Debate", *Language Problems & Language Planning* 31, no. 1 (2007): 8–13.

3 To illustrate the use of this term in the two main archives consulted, see the titles of documents and folders such as "Contribution of music to the mutual understanding between peoples: Discussion at the first session of the Standing Committee on Arts and Letters, July 1931", United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R2239/5B/28958/5757; and "Rapport documentaire et préparatoire à l'Enquête Projetée sur les Manuels Scolaires contenant des Passages Nuisibles à la Compréhension Mutuelle", UNESCO Archives, AG 1-IIIC-B 1930-1931-12. On intellectual cooperation and the League of Nations, see Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999); Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre–deux–guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018).

the circulation of intellectual production, and, as such, the object of technical work. The carriers of intellectual cooperation engaged in numerous debates and projects to reduce the difficulties that language diversity posed for the development of international relations in different intellectual subfields. For example, they interrogated the place of translation in relation to the circulation of scientific and literary works, as well as in museums and other cultural organizations.

This chapter compares the practices, values and management of languages and translation based on the premise that language and translation were the object of transversal interest, therefore enabling comparisons between administrative and technical work, two domains that are typically approached separately.[4] The chapter first deals with institutional translation.[5] In this context, it describes language use and translation in the day-to-day work of the ICIC and IIIC, which allows one to reconstruct attempts to contest standard practice. Secondly, the chapter provides an overview of the ideas and projects conceived in the domain of literary translation, paying particular attention to the politics that marked the fate of each project. The chapter concludes by highlighting structural features of the work of intellectual cooperation in the interwar period.

Languages and translation in the day-to-day work of intellectual cooperation

Language and translation policies are one of the domains that best illustrate the relations between the League bodies dedicated to intellectual cooperation. Coherence in terms of the internal policies and procedures of the League's technical bodies facilitated collaborative work and favoured the construction of a clear institutional identity. The organizations that specialized in intellectual cooperation were no exception and thus followed the League's institutional model and policies in relation to languages and translation, which considered French and English the organization's official languages.[6] Beyond this similarity, the focus on language and translation also illustrates the way the actions of an individual or organization impacted associated individuals and bodies. For example, if the IIIC requested information from a National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation on a given matter (say, a copy of a series of national laws on intellectual property), the latter could provide it in its original language or in translation, which would in turn determine whether the IIIC would require translation services or not. From this standpoint, the history of intellectual cooperation is inextricably linked to translation. Indeed, it could be said that the history of intellectual cooperation is a history of translations, one in which the focus on one institution, space or scale risks obscuring the structural role of translation in global dynamics.[7]

[4] A complete characterization of the translation policy implemented in each domain is available in Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "Language and Translation Policies in the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (1922–1946): Promoting the Internationalization of the Intellectual Field" (PhD thesis, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya / KU Leuven, 2024). For an example of existing approaches, see Reine Meylaerts, "Translation Policy", in *Handbook of Translation Studies*, vol. 2, ed. Yves Gambier and Luc van Doorslaer (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011), 163–8.

[5] Kaisa Koskinen, "Institutional Translation", in Gambier and van Doorslaer, *Handbook of Translation Studies*, vol. 2, 54–60.

[6] Carolyn N. Biltoft, *A Violent Peace: Media, Truth, and Power at the League of Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021), 40–59.

[7] Esperança Bielsa and Dionysios Kapsaskis, eds, *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Globalization* (London: Routledge, 2021).

This being said, differences can be noted in the day-to-day work of each organization, given their contrasting composition and the nature of their respective work.[8] On the one hand, the ICIC had the League's administrative services at its disposal, which included the League's Translation and Interpreting Service.[9] However, the latter rarely engaged in work for intellectual cooperation. As League Under-Secretary-General Inazō Nitobe noted, "in this Committee […] most of the time no chance was given to the interpreter and French and English were used promiscuously".[10] As a result, attention to language skills was far from secondary in the selection of the ICIC members. This, together with their restricted and selective character, granted that language would not be an obstacle in its daily work.

The same policy was not replicated at the IIIC, which had a very different composition and functioning. Among other things, the Institute was often tasked with examining the functioning of a given activity in each country. To this end, its staff would consult a range of sources, including the press, books, the legal framework and experts with different backgrounds. In this context, knowledge of a variety of languages and access to translation services significantly expanded the IIIC's capacity to access information and the geographical scope of its activities. Another difference vis-à-vis the ICIC was that the IIIC's work was more conditioned by French interests. This was confirmed by Julien Luchaire, founding director of the IIIC, who acknowledged that the dominance of the French language was one of the first results of the Institute's establishment in Paris.[11]

Bearing this aspect in mind, it is worth looking into the IIIC's archive to explore if said strategic function was maintained, nuanced or subdued over time. To do so, one can examine language use in preserved documents. Figure 2.1 plots the languages in which files preserved in the "Documents" series in the IIIC's archive were written.[12] Information regarding languages and years is extracted from folders' metadata given that, in that series, most folders correspond to a single document.

As Figure 2.1 illustrates, the IIIC's functioning substantially relied on French in its early days, but a more balanced use of the two official languages was reached during the 1930s. This change can be linked to Julien Luchaire's replacement by Henri Bonnet in 1930–31, but other factors could have prompted this shift, such as the consolidation of ties with the United States,[13] or the growth of fields of work in which English-speaking countries occupied leading positions, such as the study of international affairs.[14]

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8 In what follows, I focus on the work of the ICIC and IIIC. For more information on the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation as translation spaces, see Carbó-Catalan, "Language and Translation Policies", 252–8.

9 Haakon A. Ikonomou, "An International Language: The Translation and Interpretation Service", in *The League of Nations: Perspectives from the Present*, ed. Haakon A. Ikonomou and Karen Gram-Skjoldager (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2019), 30–9.

10 Cited in Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 195.

11 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 227–8.

12 This series contains heterogeneous materials, including reports, resolutions and summaries of different kinds. It should be noted that the IIIC's archives contain more preserved records in the correspondence series (462 boxes) than in the documents series (98 boxes). Moreover, the presented data reflects language use in the documents that are currently preserved and digitized in the archive, which do not necessarily correspond to all the documents created or used in a given year. This distinction is of particular importance when considering the small number of documents covering the initial years of the IIIC's activity.

13 As illustrated by the fact that donations from the Rockefeller Foundation covered most translation costs into English during the second half of the 1930s. See "Series – IICI Financial Records", IIIC fonds, UNESCO Archives.

14 Michael Riemens, "International Academic Cooperation on International Relations in the Interwar Period: The International Studies Conference", *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 2 (2011): 919–24.

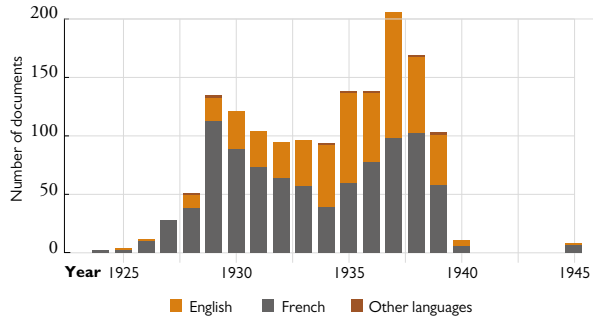


Figure 2.1:
Evolution of language use as preserved in IIIC documents. *Source*: series "IICI Documents", UNESCO Archives.

The analysis of correspondence provides additional insights into language and translation in the IIIC's channels of communication. In this case, the fact that the archive's folders contain several hundred letters renders the metadata of little assistance, as the latter provides a description at the level of folder, not of each letter. Consequently, it is necessary to undertake pre-processing work to isolate one letter from another and to retrieve the language in which each letter was written. Due to the time-consuming nature of such work, the following results refer to a correspondence sample, including letters preserved in subseries A, which contain correspondence involving the IIIC's directorate, state delegates and National Committees, and letters preserved in subseries F, which contains correspondence on literary matters. The results for the selected sample are presented in Table 2.1.[15]

	Subseries A		Subseries F	
	Typewritten letters	Handwritten letters	Typewritten letters	Handwritten letters
French	77,4	65,8	71,9	56,6
English	11,1	8,9	12	13,5
Spanish	3	0,6	2,6	3
German	1,6	0,7	5,5	2,5
Italian	0,3	0,3	1,1	1,8
Portuguese	0,4	0,2	0,7	0,3
Other languages	0,5	0,5	1,9	1,1
Total[16]	**94,3**	**77**	**95,7**	**78,8**

Table 2.1:
Language use in a sample of preserved correspondence. *Source*: Series "IICI Correspondence", UNESCO Archives.

[15] A detailed description of the methodology employed can be found in: Carbó-Catalan, "Language and Translation Policies", 139–57.

[16] The fact that totals do not add up to 100% is due to the exclusion of documents sent in attachment to letters.

As the table indicates, French was the main language employed in the communication flows that the IIIC established with its collaborators, displaying a notable contrast to the use of English. Other languages appear in the results, most of them from Western Europe and Latin America. The category "other languages" encompasses over ten languages, primarily European. Although their presence is not statistically significant, the linguistic diversity observed in the results makes it possible to identify a certain number of cases that deviate from standard practice.

Additionally, the previous results are to be nuanced, given the presence of translations in the preserved correspondence. Numerous letters in the IIIC's archive are translations, as illustrated by Figure 2.2. To quantify the presence of translations within preserved sources would require a separate research programme. However, the identification of the phenomenon problematizes the assumption that the form in which letters were preserved would faithfully reflect language use in the reality of work. This, in turn, invites us to carefully interpret our previous results, as the presence of translations, especially of incoming letters, adds nuance to a strictly monolingual or bilingual narrative of the history of intellectual cooperation. Indeed, financial records reveal traces of translation work carried out by the IIIC's staff not only between official languages, but also from languages such as Spanish, Italian, German and Dutch.[17] An analysis of personnel files indicates that, in all its years of functioning, the IIIC recruited staff with 15 different mother tongues and an ability to work in 20 working languages, something that demonstrates the strategic value of multilingualism for the IIIC.[18]

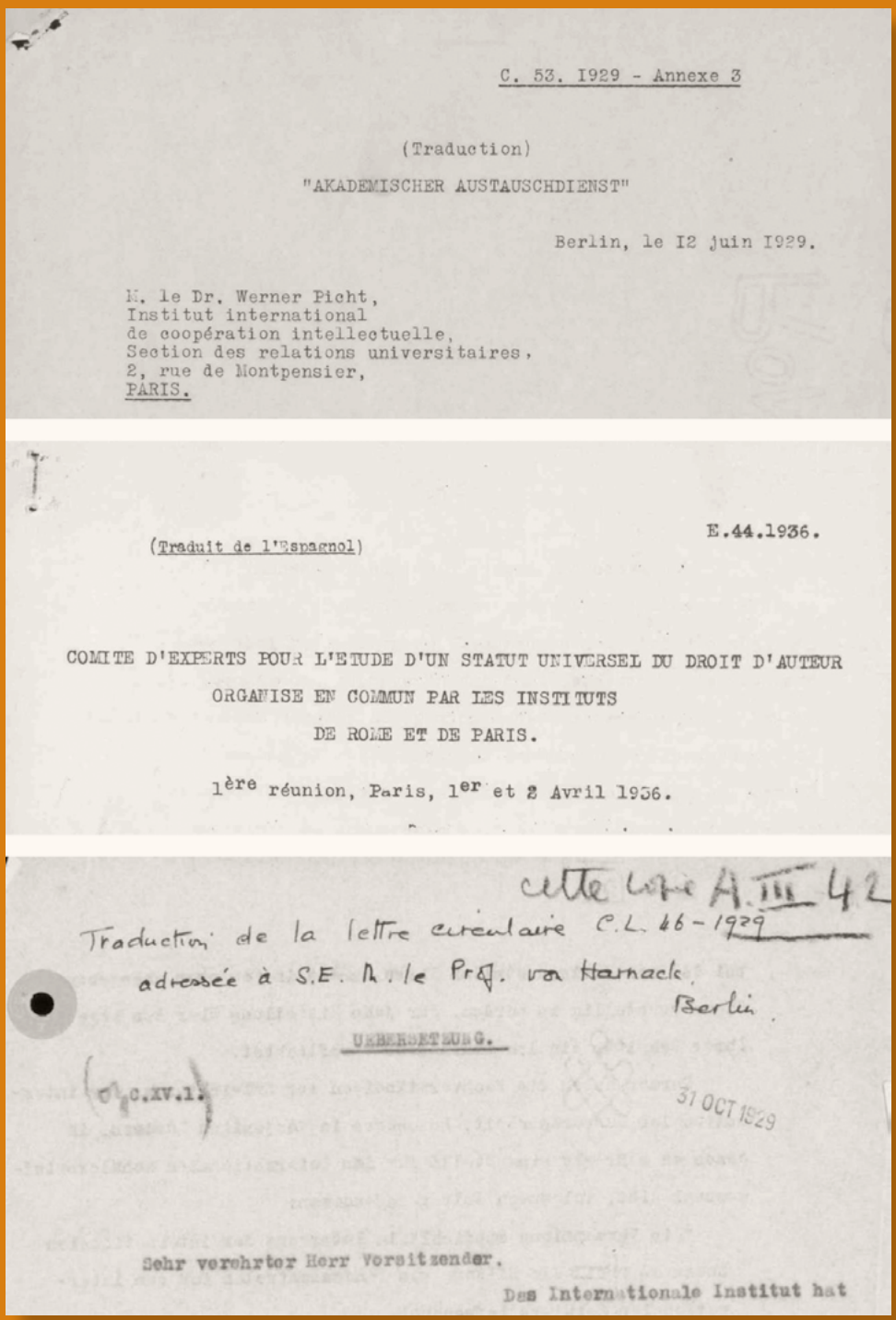
Shifting the focus to oral communication, conferences organized by the ICIC and the IIIC are of notable interest, not least because they constituted both official events and practical working meetings. Translation tasks during this type of event were fulfilled mainly by staff from the League's Translation and Interpretation Service or by those hired on an ad-hoc basis. Contrasting dynamics existed in different intellectual subfields, however. For example, for the International Conference on Higher Education, held in Paris in July 1937, translators and interpreters speaking English, French and German were hired.[19] Considering that institutional policy required the organization to grant only translation between the two official languages, the reference to German reveals that some flexibility existed in accordance with the needs identified in each context. In the case of *Entretiens* – a series of gatherings that the IIIC organized in several countries to promote exchanges between leading intellectual figures – conversations were primarily conducted in French.[20] For example, of the 22 speakers who participated in the Paris *Entretien* of 1933, only four expressed themselves in languages other than French. The British scientist J. B. S. Haldane and the American economist Edwin F. Gay used English, while the German art historian Wilhelm Pinder and

17 "Series – IICI Financial Records", IIIC fonds, UNESCO Archives.

18 "Subsubseries IV – Service administratif de l'IICI, Subseries A – Correspondance relative aux Commissions nationales, Délégués d'Etats et Affaires générales de la Direction", IIIC fonds, UNESCO Archives.

19 Two interpreters working with English and French, but also understanding German, were hired, as well as two English stenographers. Prior to the event, translation work from external collaborators was requested to: Abel Doysié (EN>FR), John R. Bacher (FR>EN), Ch. P. Klein (DE>FR) and Mrs. Blake–Bucquet (EN>FR). AG 1–IICI–C–II–25.bis, IIIC fonds, UNESCO Archives.

20 "Société des Nations. Organisation de Coopération Intellectuelle. Comité Permanent des Lettres et des Arts- Réunion convoquée à Nice du 27 au 29 octobre 1938", UNAG, C.I.C.I-L.A-91_FR, available at https://archives.ungeneva.org/0000766241-d0061 (last accessed 6 February 2025). For an example of the *Entretiens*, see Lacquaniti's contribution in this volume.



C. 53. 1929 - Annexe 3

(Traduction)

"AKADEMISCHER AUSTAUSCHDIENST"

Berlin, le 12 juin 1929.

M. le Dr. Werner Picht,
Institut international
de coopération intellectuelle,
Section des relations universitaires,
2, rue de Montpensier,
PARIS.

(Traduit de l'Espagnol)

E.44.1936.

COMITE D'EXPERTS POUR L'ETUDE D'UN STATUT UNIVERSEL DU DROIT D'AUTEUR
ORGANISE EN COMMUN PAR LES INSTITUTS
DE ROME ET DE PARIS.

1ère réunion, Paris, 1er et 2 Avril 1936.

cette lettre A.III 42

Traduction de la lettre circulaire C.L. 46-1929
adressée à S.E. M. le Prof. von Harnack,
Berlin.

UEBERSETZUNG.

C.C.XV.1.

31 OCT 1929

Sehr verehrter Herr Vorsitzender.

Das Internationale Institut hat

Figure 2.2:
Three examples of translated letters in the IIIC archives: i. Adolf Morsbach, secretary of the German National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, to Werner Picht at the IIIC, 12 June 1929 (German into French); ii. report by Senator José Antuña, president of the Inter-American Commission on Authors' Rights, 1 April 1936 (Spanish into French); iii. letter from IIIIC director Julien Luchaire to Adolf von Harnack, president of the German National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation (French into German). *Sources*: UNESCO Archives, AG 01-IICI-C-53, AG 01-IICI-E 1932-1939-44.a and AG 01-IICI-A-III-42-1.

the Polish-Austrian art historian Josef Strzygowski used German. At the 1936 *Entretien* in Budapest, Polish and Italian representatives delivered their speeches in Latin.[21]

The results presented thus far highlight two distinct dynamics. The "official" dynamic worked mainly in respect of the official language policy. The use of French and, to a lesser extent, English diminished the need of institutional translation or interpretation, enabling the use of lingua francas. In this context, language proficiency became a source of symbolic capital for intellectuals within the League's milieu. However, individual multilingualism could not be assumed in all cases, nor did it solve all the translation needs of the bodies that specialized in intellectual cooperation. For this reason, the official policy cohabited with a more complex day-to-day practice, characterized by a certain flexibility in terms of language use and translation on the part of the organizations and their collaborators.

Nevertheless, flexibility in the use of other working languages proved to be a double-edged sword. While it ensured the correct functioning and the prompt response to immediate needs, it also risked undermining the status of official languages. The decision to establish one or more official languages is an act of language planning that seeks to provide an efficient response to the difficulties arising from language diversity.[22] This decision, in turn, has both symbolic and material consequences. In the first case, it legitimizes the use of certain languages over others. In terms of material consequences, it affects the costs associated with language acquisition and translation. Consequently, the League's language and translation policy failed to meet the expectations and interests of all parties involved, with several requests to expand the League's official languages during the 1920s and the 1930s. Proposed alternatives included not only other national languages such as German and Spanish, but also the use of international languages such as Esperanto as a truly neutral solution.[23]

Intellectual cooperation was not spared from this debate. In the late 1930s, the Austrian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation requested the use of German in meetings of intellectual cooperation.[24] This triggered a series of exchanges about the League's official languages between Daniel Secrétan, the IIIC's secretary, and Jean-Daniel de Montenach, a Geneva-based official who acted as secretary of the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (ICO).[25] Although embarrassed to be making an inquiry into the League's official language in January 1938 (not in 1925 or in

[21] "International Commission on Intellectual Cooperation – 18th Session, Geneva, 13–18 July 1936 – Minutes", UNAG, R4003–5B–26703–1976, available at https://archives.ungeneva.org/international-commission-on-intellectual-cooperation-18th-session-geneva-13-18-july-1936-minutes (last accessed 6 February 2025).

[22] Joshua A. Fishman, ed., *Advances in Language Planning* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974); Mala Tabory, *Multilingualism in International Law and Institutions* (Alphen aan den Rijn: Sijthoff and Noordhoff, 1980); Jonathan Pool, "The Official Language Problem", *American Political Science Review* 85, no. 2 (1991): 495–514.

[23] Biltoft, *A Violent Peace*, 41–9; Thomas Fischer, "El español en el mundo: hispanoamericanismo en la Liga de las Naciones", *Iberoamericana: América Latina; España; Portugal* 50, no. 2 (2013): 119–31; Peter G. Forster, *The Esperanto Movement* (The Hague: Mouton, 1982), 177.

[24] The fact that Austria challenged language use within the Intellectual Cooperation Organization is consistent with Louis's conclusions on the politicization of representation within the ILO, which was fostered not by peripheral countries, but by semi–peripheries, that is, "those that consider themselves to be victims of an 'injustice' because of a gap between their actual representation […] and their perception of the place that they should occupy according to their power […] or their needs within the organization": Louis, "Une representation", 73.

[25] This term was used from 1931 to describe the bodies working in intellectual cooperation in the context of the League, and especially the Institute and the Committee: Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 479–85.

1930), the former wrote: "I seek to elucidate this question first in law, and then to situate it in fact. As regards the legal aspects, I arrive at the conclusion that no provision of the Covenant of the League of Nations mentions the official languages of the League."[26]

The reply came in a six–page note authored by Hugh McKinnon Wood, from the League's Legal Section, which intended to thwart any attempt to question the official language policy.[27] The first arguments he put forward referred to a series of documents mentioning that French and English were the official languages, although most of the documents he listed did not have legal value as such.[28] Increased costs, added delays, risk of inaccuracies and a potential snowball effect were additional arguments he used to prevent further enquiries. Finally, he declared:

> The status of French and English as the official languages has *never* been questioned. The League documents have *from the outset* been circulated in French and English. The proceedings of the Council were *from the outset* conducted, and its minutes kept, in French and English.[29]

The emphasized words stress the *natural* character of institutional practice, "natural" here meaning something that could not, and should not, be questioned. This line of reasoning perfectly illustrates how institutionalization works, that is by presenting certain practices as neutral or natural and as justified by functional needs, therefore eliminating them from debate.[30] At the same time, the recurrence of expressions emphasizing that aspect in a context characterized by a diplomatic, cold and somewhat rigid style underscores precisely the author's malaise and the fragility of his reasoning.

McKinnon Wood's report concluded in a conciliatory tone, stressing the League's flexibility regarding the use of other languages, and quite explicitly recognizing that the official policy had never represented the full picture. In his own words, "It has never been the case that the League has insisted that communications or memoranda sent to it shall be written in French or English, and we have always had to deal with and translate communications in other languages".[31] In consequence, he argued that the conferences of intellectual cooperation followed the same policy as the Assembly, namely to permit the use of other languages in conferences or committees if an interpretation into French or English was furnished by the delegation in question.[32] McKinnon Wood sought to avoid the issue by showing that multiple mechanisms enabled the use of other languages, while passing over adoption and translation costs, as well as symbolic considerations. Something he failed to state was that the League and its technical bodies could use to their advantage certain freedoms in

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[26] Correspondence from Daniel Secrétan to Jean-Daniel de Montenach, 29 January 1938, UNAG, R5794/50/32688/32688, available at https://archives.ungeneva.org/official-languages-of-the-league-various-correspondence (last accessed 6 February 2025). Emphasis in the original. My translation.

[27] "Official Languages of the League. Note by Mr. McKinnon Wood", [Received] 4 February 1938, UNAG, R5794/50/32688/32688 ("Official Languages", UNAG), available at https://archives.ungeneva.org/official-languages-of-the-league-various-correspondence (last accessed 6 February 2025).

[28] These included the *Petit Manuel de la Société des Nations*, a handbook edited by the Information Section, the minutes of the Council's fifth session, where a memorandum regarding the Secretariat's staff was adopted, and the minutes of the Council's 10th session, which "pronounced itself in favour of the official languages of the Court being French and English".

[29] "Official Languages", UNAG. My emphasis.

[30] Marieke Louis, "Une représentation dépolitisée? L'Organisation Internationale du Travail de 1919 à nos jours", *Critique Internationale* 76, no. 3 (2017): 61–80; Pierre Bourdieu, *On the State: Lectures at the College de France, 1989–1992*, trans. David Fernbach, ed. Patrick Champagne, Remi Lenoir, Franck Poupeau and Marie-Christine Riviere (Cambridge: Polity, 2014), 114–19.

[31] "Official Languages", UNAG.

[32] Ibid.

Figure 2.3:
The translation service of the Secretariat of the League of Nations. Undated photograph. *Source*: UNAG, P044_01_009.

authorizing (or not) the use or translation of non-official languages.[33] Typical cases in which they would do so included when a specific country had relevant expertise in a given domain or when they wanted to consolidate relations with a particular country. From this standpoint, the question was not only what the official languages were or who assumed translation costs, but the prerogative to establish legitimate practices.

Beyond the question of the legal basis granting French and English an official status in the League, McKinnon Wood's apparent intransigence reveals a fear that intellectual cooperation would prompt similar claims in other technical bodies or even in the League itself. From an intellectual perspective, the Austrian request should also be read as an attempt to maintain the privileged position of German in the intellectual sphere.

From a present-day vantage point, McKinnon Wood's response prefigured some of the principal arguments that would characterize debates on language and translation policies in most international organizations in the twentieth century. Today, the debate between one lingua franca, in this case English, and multilingualism is alive and well,[34] despite evidence that the use of one lingua franca is not necessarily the most cost-effective solution.[35] What is more, the debate and challenges continue well beyond academic circles. Contemporary international organizations such as the United Nations appear to be struggling to reconcile the values they espouse, such as multilingualism, with the realities of practice, as one relatively recent report reveals.[36]

Efforts to improve the practice of literary translation: an example of technical work

Having addressed language and policies relating to institutional translation, this chapter will now focus on the policy applied in relation to literary translation.[37] Work in this domain was conducted mainly by the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters, which in turn depended on the ICIC, and by the IIIC's Section for Literary Relations. Chronologically, such work can be divided into three main stages. The first stage from 1923 to 1928 was a period of planning. The second phase started in 1928–29 and was characterized by efforts to establish collaboration with intellectual organizations to improve the quality of translation services and to promote the theorization of translation practices. A third and final phase started in 1932–33, when a number of practical results materialized.

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[33] McKinnon referred to the exceptionality of any other course of action in a circular reasoning: "The publication of League documents in the two official languages, French and English, has been a matter of course from the commencement of the League, and this practice has only been departed from where there were e*xceptional reasons* for doing so. *With very few exceptions*, all the agreements negotiated under the auspices of the League have also been drawn up in French and English, and the *exceptions are justified by very special reasons*." "Official Languages", UNAG. My emphasis.

[34] As an example of the first, see: Philippe Van Parijs, *Linguistic Justice for Europe and for the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). For a critique, see Josep Soler and Sergi Morales-Gálvez, "Linguistic Justice and Global English: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 2022, no. 277 (2022): 1–16.

[35] Michele Gazzola and François Grin, "Is ELF More Effective and Fair Than Translation? An Evaluation of the EU's Multilingual Regime", *International Journal of Applied Linguistics* 23, no. 1 (2013): 93–107.

[36] Nikolay Lozinskiy, *Multilingualism in the United Nations System: Report of the Joint Inspection Unit* (Geneva: United Nations, 2020).

[37] Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Reine Meylaerts, "Translation Policies in the Longue Durée: From the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation to UNESCO", in *Global Literary Studies: Key Concepts*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Neus Rotger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022).

The first phase involved an international enquiry into the conditions under which translation was being practised. The survey drew on consultations with individuals and organizations with prior experience in translation alongside the collection of articles published in the press in different countries. In addition, the ICIC set up an expert committee featuring representatives from both importing and exporting countries, as well as different relevant parties, including authors, publishers, translators and experts in foreign literatures. The overall diagnosis was that the quality of translations was, more often than not, unsatisfactory, therefore necessitating a series of interventions. In the summer of 1927, these efforts resulted in plans for a programme of activities, which aimed at improving the quality of translations, their circulation in the different target cultures, translators' working conditions and that activity's social recognition. Specific emphasis was placed on promoting the circulation of lesser-known literatures. Typical from this period were some ambitious projects that were never implemented, such as the idea to create an international translation office.[38]

Drawing on the results of such preliminary steps, more concrete lines of work followed in the second phase. Based on the premise that cooperation between multiple agents was necessary to promote any kind of improvement, the IIIC created a translators' repertoire that was supposed to facilitate contact between writers and translators. This project soon widened, leading to the creation of lists of individuals and organizations interested in foreign literatures and translation, which included also scholars, publishing houses, periodicals and literary critiques. The IIIC also tried to collaborate with organizations representing the involved professions and occupations. This included work with PEN Clubs and with the Association Littéraire et Artistique Internationale to foster authors' involvement in the appointment of translators and to ensure the quality of translations.[39] They also sought to collaborate with the International Publishers Congress to foster a clear-cut distinction between full translations, abridgments and adaptations, and a fairer and clearer division of benefits and responsibilities between author, publisher and translator. Furthermore, the IIIC promoted the creation of national associations of translators and their international cooperation, as well as the study of translation from a legal perspective, although it obtained few results in this regard.[40]

In this period, the IIIC promoted further reflection on the question of translation: the Institute echoed several critiques that language learning in universities focused more on grammar than on the practical aspects of translation, and in response, sought to serve as a centre and disseminator for early theorizations on translation. The IIIC's bulletin, *La Coopération Intellectuelle*, devoted a good part of its fourth issue, published in April 1929, to translation. Notably, it included a section titled "Opinions on the Question of Translation", which contained a series of statements and articles written for the occasion, but also some articles recently published elsewhere. The contributions covered a polemic on the alleged invasion of certain national literary fields with translations and

[38] Sources on this project are fragmentary due to the loss of archives. A related project was proposed some years later to organize an international conference gathering authors, publishers and translators to address this activity, as well as a project to create an international arbitration tribunal specialized on translation. See Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "A Global Governance of Translation? International Organizations and the Institutionalization of Translation from a Relational Perspective", *The Translator* 31, no. 1 (2025): 17–32.

[39] On PEN, see Hyei Jin Kim, "The World According to PEN and UNESCO: Makers of World Literature, 1921–1996" (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 2022).

[40] The interest in translation from a legal standpoint was connected to questions of intellectual property. On this subject, see Isabella Löhr, "Intellectual Cooperation in Transnational Networks: The League of Nations and the Globalization of Intellectual Property Rights", in *Transnational Political Space: Agents, Structures, Encounters*, ed. Mathias Albert (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2009), 58–88; Isabella Löhr, "The Propertisation and Internationalisation of Culture in the 20th Century", *Comparativ* 21, no. 2 (2011): 29–45.

the effects the latter had on national authors and production; critiques that commercial criteria dominated the selection of texts to be translated; issues related to the translatability of certain genres and textual typologies such as poetry; debates between different translation methods and techniques; and considerations on whether translation should be understood as an art or, instead, as a craft.[41]

The 1930s can be characterized as a third phase, in which the more ambitious projects implemented by the IIIC materialized. This included the publication of the *Index Translationum*, the first international bibliography of translations,[42] and that of the Ibero–American and the Japanese Collections, two collections of books published in translation.[43] Both areas of work also stand out in terms of their subsequent continuation under UNESCO's umbrella.[44] The continuity between the interwar and the post-war literary collections is further underscored by the fact that, for the carriers of intellectual cooperation during the 1930s, the ultimate goal of the literary collections was to form a multilateral or world literature collection,[45] with references preserved in the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters' early work to a "Collection internationale des littératures nationales".[46]

From the perspective of the history of translation, the work developed under the League's auspices constitutes one of the rare sources enabling a relational history of translation, that is one that approaches translation as it was perceived by the multiple agents involved in books' life cycles, including authors, translators, publishers and librarians, but also in terms of public interest.[47] From the perspective of global history, it can be noted that several projects created or discussed in this domain shared the feature of being works of synthesis or compilation forms. Lists of books recommended for translation, lists of existing translations, directories of intellectuals interested in translation, translation statistics and literary collections are, ultimately, lists of different sorts. In other words, they all constitute synthetic forms that sought to introduce certain order in the virtual disorder of the global intellectual space. Lists delineate the contours of a group, but they also function as tools to create value.[48] This ambiguity characterized all the projects previously described, just as the

41 *La Coopération Intellectuelle: Revue de l'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle* (15 April 1929): 204–35.

42 Bernard Banoun and Isabelle Poulin, "L'âge de la traduction", in *Histoire des traductions en langue française: XXe siècle*, ed. Bernard Banoun and Yves Chevrel (Lagrasse: Verdier, 2019), 47–54. See also the section on the *Index* in Sandra Poupaud, Anthony Pym and Ester Torres Simón, "Finding Translations. On the use of Bibliographical Databases in Translation History", *Meta: Translators' Journal* 54, no. 2 (2009): 264–78.

43 On the Ibero-American collection, see Alexandra Pita González, "América (Latina) en París. Mistral, Reyes y Torres Bodet en la Colección Iberoamericana, 1927–1940", in *América Latina y el internacionalismo ginebrino de entreguerras: resonancias e implicaciones*, ed. Fabián Herrera León and Yannick Wehrli (Mexico: Dirección General del Acervo Histórico Diplomático, 2019), 241–76; Juliette Dumont, *Diplomatie culturelles et fabrique des identités. Argentine, Brésil, Chili (1919–1946)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2018), 56–7; Anne-Frédérique Schläpfer, "La Collection Ibéro-Américaine de l'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle (1930–1939): un exemple de glocalisation", *Colloquium Helveticum*, 51 (2022): 101–12; Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "Literary Translation: Between Intellectual Cooperation and Cultural Diplomacy. The Ibero-American Collection (1930–1940)," *Translation in Society* 2, no. 1 (2023): 15–32. On the Japanese collection, see Takashi Saikawa, "From Intellectual Co-Operation to International Cultural Exchange: Japan and China in the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations, 1922–1939" (PhD thesis, Heidelberg Universität, 2014), 208–38; Lauriane Millet, "Esprit japonais et prémices du multiculturalisme: Le Japon au sein de l'Organisation de coopération intellectuelle dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Bulletin de l'Institut Pierre Renouvin* 39, no. 1 (2014): 79–90.

44 Carbó-Catalan and Meylaerts, "Translation Policies in the Longue Durée", 322–4.

45 Teresa Seruya, Lieven D'hulst, Alexandra Assis Rosa and Maria Lin Moniz, *Translation in Anthologies and Collections (19th and 20th Centuries)* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2013).

46 Sub-Committee of Arts and Letters, 1st session minutes, 6 October 1925, UNAG, C.I.C.I-L.A-1e session-P.V.3_FR, UNAG, available at https://archives.ungeneva.org/0000766242-d0003 (last accessed 4 February 2025).

47 Carbó-Catalan, "A Global Governance of Translation?".

48 Ernest A. Hakanen, "Lists as Social Grid: Ratings and Rankings in Everyday Life", *Social Semiotics* 12, no. 3 (2002): 245–54.

interplay between internationalism and nationalism marked the history of intellectual cooperation.[49] These observations bring us to the fate of each project. The translators' repertoire was abandoned after a couple of years, given fears that being listed was interpreted as a form of consecration or as a guarantee of the work done by listed translators, rather than as a purely practical tool to facilitate contact with practitioners. Lists of books recommended for translation were also abandoned, given the impossibility of reaching consensus on questions of literary value and the IIIC's inability to appear as a mere distributer of information.

As noted, two projects endured. Lists of published translations (and the ensuing translation statistics) was one area of continuation. However, their results were read, from their very first creation, in terms of value-creation, too. In this case, however, valued items were not only books, but also countries. Translations statistics allowed for the quantification of book imports and exports, but quantification quickly turned into qualification. Exporting countries, it could be implied, possessed a valuable intellectual production. The corollary idea was that a lack of exports reflected a minor intellectual production, something that was strenuously refuted by intellectuals from peripheral countries, who attributed their lack of exports to the lack of interest their works encountered abroad. The IIIC echoed this view on the side of representatives of Latin America, Poland and Japan. Other countries, such as the Netherlands, accompanied their translation statistics with a note acknowledging the fact that intellectuals in that country often read works in their original languages, therefore adding nuance to any straightforward interpretation of translation statistics.

The position of each country in the "world republic of letters", to use Pascale Casanova's wording, was not the sole determining factor in the interpretation of translation statistics.[50] Documentation preserved in the IIIC archive provides clear evidence that the significance of import or export numbers varied depending on the underlying ideology. From an internationalist perspective, high imports were viewed as a positive indicator of openness. However, from a nationalist standpoint, they were considered as a sign of insufficiency of one's own production and also as an indicator of weakness before foreign production and taste. By the same token, a discreet involvement in translation flows was read by some as signifying isolationism or provincialism, whereas those with opposing political leanings interpreted it as a demonstration of self-sufficiency and pride.

The second project to withstand the test of time was the publication of literary collections, which also attracted a degree of political controversy. In contrast to other lines of work that sought to improve translation as a process or as an activity (such as translators' repertoire or the legal framework), these ventures promoted specific translations as objects. By publishing literary collections, the IIIC favoured the circulation of certain products with a specific source and target language, written by an author considered to be representative of a specific country, and conveying a specific understanding on the latter's history. It was clearly with this goal in mind that governments sponsored the translations intended to represent each country. Therefore, propaganda or soft power goals determined the involvement of several Latin American and Japanese governments in creating supply-driven translations.[51] But the latter simultaneously benefitted the target language and culture,

[49] Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[50] Pascale Casanova, *The World Republic of Letters*, trans. M. B. Debevoise (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[51] Ondrej Vimr, "Supply-Driven Translation: Compensating for Lack of Demand", in *Translating the Literatures of Small European Nations*, ed. Rajendra Chitnis et al. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2019), 47–67.

which was French, by increasing their universal character and their central position. Therefore, the duality and directionality of translations reveals the ways in which it can serve complementary interests, as well as all the ambiguity between international cooperation and national strategies of cultural diplomacy.

From today's perspective, the *Index* remains the only publicly accessible international translation database, although it is not without criticism.[52] Despite the growing interest in the scholarly domain in transnational and multilateral exchange, translation statistics remain dependent on data produced by the state or by related organizations. Literary collections edited by UNESCO during the second half of the twentieth century enlarged the geographic scope and target languages of the interwar collections. Nevertheless, this line of work was subsequently discontinued, with international organizations opting mainly for other forms of engagement in the literary domain.[53]

Conclusion: towards a transversal characterization of the policies of intellectual cooperation

The language and translation policies implemented by the League bodies specializing in intellectual cooperation in relation to institutional and literary translation share certain common features, beginning with their geographic scope. Both the languages appearing in institutional communication and the participants and ideas on literary translation exhibit a predominantly Western orientation. Additionally, contradiction existed between the discursive level, where emphasis was placed on inclusivity and interest on lesser-known languages and literatures, and practices, where priority was given to central languages and literatures and the appurtenant countries.

In both domains, policies were shaped by power relations between states and the international organizations and between the intellectual and the political field. The language and translation policy in institutional communications was marked by the interests of international organizations to establish a certain number of institutional practices, as well as by some countries' efforts to consecrate certain official languages, but also on semi-peripheral states' efforts to re-politicize language use. From this perspective, the political strategies of individual states were informed by the actions of international organizations, just as the latter sought to introduce change and homogeneity in national practices. This suggests that both international organizations and states should be understood as agents engaging in multi-scale processes.[54] In the case of literary translation, lists, it can be argued, retranslated the interplay of internationalist and nationalist logics into the technical domain. Their unifying function corresponded to the desires of international organizations, namely to centralize and disseminate information, rather than creating value or imposing their own views. At the same time, however, lists could also serve the competition between states.

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52 Poupaud, Pym and Torres Simón, "Finding Translations", 264–78.

53 Myriam Intrator, *Books across Borders: UNESCO and the Politics of Postwar Cultural Reconstruction, 1945–1951* (Cham: Palgrave, 2019); Núria Codina and Jack McMartin, "The European Union Prize for Literature: Disseminating European Values through Translation and Supranational Consecration", in *Culture as Soft Power: Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy*, ed. Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Diana Roig-Sanz (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 343–72.

54 Becky Mansfield, "Beyond Rescaling: Reintegrating the 'National' as a Dimension of Scalar Relations", *Progress in Human Geography* 29, no. 4 (2005): 458–73.

Within the ICIC and IIIC, language and translation policy required a precarious equilibrium between the intellectual and the political field. The political field used the intellectual field for legitimization and propaganda purposes, and the intellectual field used the political field for market construction and to legitimize its social function. Bureaucratic machinery could block or shape specific projects, thus illustrating the ways the institutional structure was used to avoid a direct clash between intellectual interests and states' interests, with a relative satisfaction of them both being a precondition for their own survival.

3

Fruitful Failure:

Intellectual Cooperation and the Institutionalization of Scientific Research

Gabriel Galvez-Behar

The creation of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) in 1922 – followed by the establishment of the International Institute (IIIC) in 1925–26 – came at a very special time in the evolution of the organization of scientific research worldwide.[1] Since the late nineteenth century, as a result of the so-called "second industrial revolution", the number of young adults trained in higher education was on the rise. In this period, large companies increasingly relied more and more on advances in knowledge, for instance by setting up central laboratories.[2] Scientific research took on new institutional forms. On the eve of the First World War, political power became increasingly involved in the governance of science. Examples include the creation of the French Fund for Scientific Research (Caisse des recherches scientifiques) in 1901 and the German Kaiser Wilhelm Gesellschaft in 1911. During the conflict itself, various scientific mobilizations crystallized this movement, giving scientists a new place and responsibility, and incorporating them into the new machinery of war.[3] These mobilizations also shattered the transnational logic that had prevailed in the academic world since the end of the nineteenth century.[4]

The end of the First World War imposed a reconfiguration of the scientific world and created a series of challenges for the scientific communities: a demographic problem (many young scientists died at the front), an economic issue (production imperatives could turn young people away from scientific careers) and, finally, a moral challenge, as the conflict had questioned the universal nature of science. The scientific actors who contributed to the mobilization were faced with a paradoxical situation: while they had demonstrated their usefulness and sometimes exerted unprecedented influence in the political sphere, they were in a difficult situation once the war was over.[5] Anchoring the gains of wartime institutional innovations was as imperative as rebuilding the frameworks of intellectual cooperation.

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1 François Caron, *La dynamique de l'innovation: Changement technique et changement social* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010).

2 Gabriel Galvez-Behar, *Posséder la science: La propriété scientifique au temps du capitalisme industriel* (Paris: Éditions de l'École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2020).

3 Anne Rasmussen, "Science and Technology", in *A Companion to World War I*, ed. John Horne (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 307–22.

4 Tomás Irish, *The University at War, 1914–25: Britain, France, and the United States* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2015).

5 Anne Rasmussen, "Mobiliser, remobiliser, démobiliser: Les formes d'investissement scientifique en France dans la Grande Guerre", in *Le sabre et l'éprouvette: L'invention d'une science de guerre, 1914–1939*, ed. David Aubin and Patrice Bret (Paris: Agnès Vienot Editions, 2003), 49–59.

The League of Nations' intellectual cooperation initiatives were a powerful lever for this project, but we know that they were constrained by the relative weakness of their economic resources and political means. However, they were not ineffective. The aim of this chapter is to show how the ICIC and IIIC contributed to the emergence of a new status for scientific research thanks to projects that turned out to be fruitful failures. Sociology, management science and even history have taken a keen interest in failures, both to explain how they can occur and to show how they can contribute to building future successes.[6] Ultimately, such work laid the foundations for overcoming the failure/success dichotomy. This chapter similarly moves beyond this dichotomy, namely by considering the action of intellectual cooperation institutions as a fruitful failure. Indeed, while they did not always succeed in achieving the objectives they set themselves, the collateral effects of their pursuit contributed to changes that were far from insignificant.

The chapter focuses on the economic status of scientific research. It aims to understand how institutions sought to analyse the role of science in the economic order of the interwar period, and how they sought to change it. To this end, the chapter focuses on three particular moments. First, it examines how the ICIC and the IIIC came to address the crisis of intellectual work. Second, the chapter explores the resources of scientific activity, which led to a specific survey in the early 1930s. Finally, the chapter considers the debate on scientific property before discussing the results of these various initiatives.

The crisis of intellectual work

The various initiatives in favour of scientific research were linked to the League of Nations' projects about intellectual labour and its material resources. Explored in Jean-Jacques Renoliet's study of intellectual cooperation, this positioning has been subject to further analysis by Christophe Verbruggen, who has highlighted the role played by intellectual workers' trade unions in the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the League of Nations.[7] Verbruggen clearly shows that the representation of this new category of workers came up against a diversity of expectations and competing projects. This raises the question of how the latter relate to intellectual cooperation projects.

The "intellectual trade unionism" that had been developing since the late nineteenth century was not confined to the artistic and cultural spheres. In the technical and scientific fields, the defence of engineers rights, for example, was particularly sensitive at a time when large corporations were increasing their control over the inventions of their employees.[8] Organizations dedicated to the defence of authors' rights were also arenas in which such engineers' demands were heard, as demonstrated by the discussions at the 1898 Turin congress of the International Literary and Artistic Association, whose role had been essential to the emergence of an international regulation concerning intellectual property.[9]

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[6] For a recent perspective, see Adriana Mica, Mikołaj Pawlak, Anna Horolets and Paweł Kubicki, eds, *Routledge International Handbook of Failure* (London: Routledge, 2023); Filippo Barbera and Ian Rees Jones, "The Moral Economy of Failure", *Sociologica* 17, no 3 (2023): 129–44.

[7] Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999), 14; Christophe Verbruggen, "'Intellectual Workers' and Their Search for a Place Within the ILO During the Interwar Period", in *ILO Histories: Essays on the International Labour Organization and its Impact on the World during the Twentieth Century*, ed. Jasmien Van Daele and Magaly Rodriguez Garcia (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 271–92.

[8] Catherine L. Fisk, *Working Knowledge: Employee Innovation and the Rise of Corporate Intellectual Property, 1800–1930* (Chapell Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

[9] Isabella Löhr, *Die Globalisierung geistiger Eigentumsrechte: Neue Strukturen internationaler Zusammenarbeit, 1886–1952* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2010), 52–3.

Rising demands from the intellectual professions inspired economic and political reflection on the respective roles of intellectual and manual labour. This question was prevalent among certain revolutionary thinkers. For the German socialist theorist Karl Kautsky, the growing numbers of "intellectual workers" were likely to become part of the proletariat's class struggle.[10] By contrast, the Polish anarchist Jan Makhaïski viewed "intellectuals workers" as a threat to socialism as they might succeed capitalists as a force exploiting the masses.[11] This thinking went beyond the socialist or revolutionary sphere. In France, former Fourierist engineer Louis-Léger Vauthier analysed the similarities between manual and intellectual labour and justified the superiority of the former over the latter.[12] For the economist Charles Gide, by contrast, this hierarchy tended to diminish the fact that manual and intellectual labour occupied the same economic status vis-à-vis the entrepreneur.[13] Even before the First World War, the social and economic role of intellectual workers was the subject of extensive and important debates.

The end of the war intensified these questions. In France, the creation of the Union of French Engineering Unions (Union des syndicats d'ingénieurs français) in 1919 led to the establishment of the Confederation of Intellectual Workers (Confédération des travailleurs intellectuels, CTI) the following year. This unionization movement also occurred in countries such as Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands. The emergence of new international organizations offered new opportunities and recognition, both for often young intellectual unions and for various reform entrepreneurs. In January 1920, French literary scholar and senior civil servant Julien Luchaire proposed a "Draft Convention Creating a Permanent Organization for International Understanding and Collaboration in Matters of Education and in the Sciences, Letters and Arts". Having the International Labour Office in mind, Luchaire advocated "the centralization and distribution of all information concerning the intellectual work of the Nations".[14]

According to Jean-Jacques Renoliet, this project inspired the initiative taken by the French Society for the League of Nations (Association française pour la Société des Nations, AFSDN) in July 1920. Indeed, the AFSDN hoped that the League "would soon include an organization for intellectual labour analogous to that which already exists for manual labour".[15] Yet, despite the parallel drawn with the International Labour Office, Luchaire's project attached little importance to the material interests of intellectual workers: the new body was supposed to contribute to the organization of "intellectual production" by avoiding the dispersal of forces. The project thus fed on ambiguity about the meaning of the term "organization", and on the asymmetry between the institutional recognition of manual work and neglect of intellectual work.[16]

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10 Karl Kautsky, "Die Intelligenz und die Sozialdemokratie", *Die Neue Zeit* 13, no. 27 (1894–1895): 10–16; *Die Neue Zeit,* no. 28 (1894–1895): 43–8; *Die Neue Zeit*, no. 29 (1894–1895): 74–80.

11 Jan Wacław Machajski, *Le socialisme des intellectuels*, trans. Alexandre Skirda (Paris: Les Éditions de Paris, 2001 [orig. 1905]), 20.

12 Louis-Léger Vauthier, "Travail intellectuel et travail manuel", *Revue économique* 14, no. 1 (1900): 59–81.

13 Charles Gide, "Travail intellectuel et travail manuel", *Foi et vie: Revue de quinzaine, religieuse, morale, littéraire, sociale*, 16 August 1901, 307–12.

14 Julien Luchaire, "La Société des nations et la vie intellectuelle internationale", *L'Europe nouvelle*, 17 January 1920, 64.

15 Letter from Paul Appell, president of the Association française pour la SDN, to Eric Drummond, 8 July 1920, as cited in Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée*, 13.

16 Patrick Fridenson, "Un tournant taylorien de la société française (1904–1918)" *Annales: Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 42, no. 5 (1987): 1031–60.

This ambiguity was reinforced by the various points of view that characterized the constitution of the ICIC: from the Union of International Associations (UIA) and the AFSDN, whose projects differed and even clashed, to the General Secretariat of the League of Nations, itself under pressure from those who wanted to contain the expansion of technical bodies, and from the ILO.[17] In addition, other individuals and institutions worked at national level to defend the organization of intellectual cooperation. In the two years preceding the first meeting of the ICIC, the alliances and divergences between these actors were far from monolithic. The place of intellectual work and the question of its material resources were key issues at stake in this dynamic, which was, as Daniel Laqua has shown, all the more complex because of the legacy of wartime divisions in Europe.[18]

One of the key questions was who should take charge of problems relating to the material interests of intellectual workers. Initial discussions of the UIA's proposals by the Assembly of the League of Nations in November 1920 confined themselves to soliciting support for initiatives whose "object [was] the development of international cooperation in the intellectual field".[19] Yet, in a report to the League Assembly a month later, Belgian delegate Henri La Fontaine suggested that "intellectual labour must be able to equip itself on an equal footing with manual labour".[20] As Martin Grandjean has noted, this report provoked a reaction from British delegate George N. Barnes. For Barnes, "if help is to be given to intellectual labour [...] the body best suited for the purpose is the International Labor Office".[21] La Fontaine, however, did not consider the social conditions of intellectual workers as a prerogative of the new organization.[22] Who, then, should take responsibility for the material interests of intellectual workers?

The prerogatives of the ILO in the field of intellectual work were far from obvious. It is hard to imagine that the ILO would have reserved socio-economic issues relating to intellectual work for itself, while the new committee would have only focused on intellectual cooperation.[23] As Tomás Irish has observed,"there was some overlap in function between the intellectual cooperation bodies of the League of Nations […] and the work of the International Labour Organization".[24] In fact, it can even be argued that this overlap resulted from a much vaguer compromise, which was forged in the second half of 1921 within both the League of Nations and the ILO. The French prime minister Aristide Briand ended up supporting the convening of an international conference to create a "permanent body concerned with intellectual work". When asked about the project, Minister of Public Instruction Léon Bérard explicitly mentioned the need to address the material working conditions of intellectuals.[25] At the same time, the UIA organized a first international congress of

17 See Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018).

18 Daniel Laqua "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", *Journal of Global History* 6, no 2 (2011): 223–47.

19 *Actes de la première Assemblée de la Société des Nations: Séances plénières* (Genève: Société des Nations, 1920), 501, as cited in Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 147.

20 *Actes de la première Assemblée de la Société des Nations*, 755.

21 Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 149; *Actes de la première Assemblée de la Société des Nations*, 756 (session on 18 December 1920).

22 *Actes de la première Assemblée de la Société des Nations*, 757 (session on 18 December 1920).

23 Verbruggen, "'Intellectual Workers' and Their Search for a Place Within the ILO", 286.

24 Tomás Irish, *Feeding the Mind: Humanitarianism and the Reconstruction of European Intellectual Life, 1919–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 213.

25 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 17.

intellectual workers and obtained a mandate to represent it at the ILO and the organs of the League of Nations.[26] A new context was thus in place to raise the issue of intellectual workers and their material conditions within the emerging international institutions.

A study of the League Assembly draft resolution on intellectual cooperation confirms the ambivalent approach to this issue. In his report presented in September 1921, Léon Bourgeois acknowledged that he had "omitted all reference to an aspect of the problem to which the attention of the League has nevertheless already been drawn [...] the defence of the interests and the improvement of the position of intellectual workers".[27] For Bourgeois, this was a matter for the ILO and not for the new intellectual cooperation commission. Therefore, his draft resolution placed no emphasis on the material conditions of intellectual workers.[28] A few days later, when the Assembly's Fifth Committee examined the Bourgeois report, Henri La Fontaine focused on the question of "the evolution and the scope of the movement for the international coordination of intellectual work" and emphasized "the necessity of different treatment for this subject as distinct from that of intellectual workers" and of "the betterment of material conditions in the sphere of intellectual work".[29] Discussions on the draft resolution introduced only a few amendments. Apart from the title of the resolution, which included the expression "intellectual work", nothing explicitly referred to the issue of the material conditions of intellectual workers. Rather, the very expression "intellectual exchange" suggested that the ICIC would confine itself to questions of cooperation.

The ILO's director, however, offered a different interpretation. In a letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the League, Albert Thomas noted that the Assembly, in endorsing Bourgeois's report, "decided at the same time not to limit in any way the programme of the twelve-member committee to be appointed by the Council". To him, it seemed logical that a future "Consultative Committee on Intellectual Labour" would "have to consider the assistance that the League of Nations could provide to intellectual workers, *in all its forms*".[30] Thomas went on to explain this interpretation:

> in the minds of the initiators of this work, it was primarily a question of coordinating the work of intellectuals, and facilitating their research with a view to promoting, through international cooperation, the progress of the human spirit. But it is clear that the Commission will also have to deal with the economic situation of intellectual workers, which rightly concerns them and which they themselves intend to submit to the League of Nations, as shown by the resolutions recently passed by the Brussels International Congress.[31]

Contrary to the literal reading of the draft resolution, Albert Thomas's interpretation gave the proposed committee a freedom of vision and of action. In fact, by using a sort of apophasis, Thomas himself suggested to the League Secretariat that the ICIC take on the problem of the "economic

[26] "La protection internationale des travailleurs intellectuels", *Revue internationale du travail* 4, no. 1 (1921): 16.

[27] *Journal officiel de la Société des Nations* 2, no. 10–12, (1921): 1105.

[28] Ibid., 1105–6.

[29] Fifth Commission Minutes, 10 September 1921, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R1029/13C/15769/14297.

[30] Letter from Albert Thomas to Eric Drummond, 13 September 1921, UNAG, R1029-13C-15769-14297 (author's translation and emphasis).

[31] Ibid.

situation of intellectual workers". He went on to point out that the ILO Governing Body had not taken any decision on the advisability of dealing with intellectual workers. Thomas then proposed methods through which the ILO and the future committee could work together. In doing so, he intended to anchor the issue of the economic conditions of intellectual labour in the agenda of the League and the ILO, while keeping open the question of its specific institutional framework.

However, the League's Secretary-General, Eric Drummond, was reluctant to endorse this point of view. Drummond's deputy, Inazō Nitobe, considered that "the resolution to the organisation of intellectual work [...] does not refer to – in fact, carefully avoids any mention of – intellectual workers", but held out the possibility of an opening.[32] Answering Thomas in November 1921, Drummond insisted that the purpose of the committee was indeed intellectual exchange. Moreover, likely considering the ICIC a place for discussion and intellectual exchange rather than a political body, he added that it did not "seem to him that this object involves, at least directly, the examination of questions of organization or protection of intellectual workers".[33] However, Drummond recognized the complete freedom of the future committee to establish its programme, and accepted the proposal that an ILO member be invited to take part in its work.

In parallel with this exchange, the question of intellectual labour featured at the Third International Labour Conference held in Geneva in November 1921. Despite British opposition, the French delegate Justin Godart succeeded in getting a resolution passed. It invited the ILO Governing Body to "consider means of creating a Commission on intellectual work".[34] However, this body waited until July 1922, and left it to the ICIC, whose members had been appointed in May. Due to internal differences, the ILO was not ready to take on the question of the material interests of intellectual workers. It was not until 1927, with the creation of the Consultative Committee for Intellectual Workers, that it did so.[35] In the early 1920s, this compromise enabled the ICIC to go beyond the sole question of intellectual cooperation even though it was set up on a temporary consultative basis. To put the question of the material conditions of intellectual life on the agenda of an international organization, even in such a fragile way, was an undeniable success.

Investigating science

As a result of this arrangement, the ICIC turned its attention to the material problems of intellectual life and work. The first project to attract particular attention was a survey of the situation of intellectual life in the aftermath of the First World War, which formed the basis for further work on the resources of scientific research.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, plans for international statistics on intellectual life emerged in the wake of the growth of academic institutions and debates on intellectual work. Some journals, such as *Minerva: Jahrbuch der gelehrten Welt* (*Minerva: Yearbook of the World*

[32] Draft letter from Inazō Nitobe to Albert Thomas, 21 September 1921, UNAG, R1029/13C/15769/14297. This document has been attributed to Nitobe as it accompanies an earlier note by him (dated 16 September 1921).

[33] Letter to Albert Thomas, 14 November 1921, UNAG R1029/13C/15769/14297 (author's emphasis).

[34] *International Labour Conference, Third Session, Geneva – 1921, vol. 1, First and Second Parts* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 1921), 802. See the discussion on pages 561–5, 777.

[35] Gisèle Sapiro, "L'internationalisation des champs intellectuels dans l'entre-deux-guerres: Facteurs professionnels et politiques", in *L'espace intellectuel en Europe: de la formation des États-nations à la mondialisation XIXe–XXIe siècle*, ed. Gisèle Sapiro (Paris: La Découverte, 2009), 111–46.

of Scholarship) produced resources that enabled comparisons of university life in different countries. In addition, the establishment of international conventions on industrial property (Paris Union, 1883) and copyright (Bern Union, 1886) led to the regular production of statistics on patents and book publications from these new international organizations.[36] Finally, other initiatives were developed as part of the movement towards scientific internationalism that characterized the period.[37] For example, in 1901, the International Statistical Institute set up a special committee to compile statistics on higher education. Two years later, the economist Carlo Ferraris published a *Programme for International Higher Education Statistics*.[38]

The ICIC was thus able to resume a series of reflections and practices aimed at understanding the reality of intellectual life. It did so, however, with a sense of urgency, given the crises facing intellectuals in certain war-torn countries such as Russia, Poland and Austria. For this reason, at its first session in August 1922, the Committee adopted a resolution inviting the League Council to entrust it with a survey of the situation of intellectual life in the various countries. In September, the Council accepted the request, suggesting that the survey should focus on "the economic situation of intellectual workers".[39] Throughout the autumn, several members prepared a questionnaire, which they resubmitted to the League Council before forwarding it to the various member states.[40]

This survey resulted in the publication of some forty booklets covering 22 countries, with the notable exception of Great Britain, and various themes.[41] Although the responses were highly heterogeneous, they mainly concerned universities and higher education, as well as the material problems encountered by the various intellectual professions. The survey was also an opportunity to reflect on the methodological aspects of setting up international statistics on intellectual life, in order to facilitate comparisons.[42]

This interest was reflected in two other publications issued by IIIC after its creation in 1925. *La Statistique intellectuelle de la France* was published in 1926 by Tatiana Chestov, head of the Institute's analysis department.[43] This compendium had been in preparation since 1925 thanks to a partnership between the French Ministry of Public Instruction, the Institute of Statistics of the University of Paris and the IIIC itself.[44] Comprising 125 pages, it brought together some fifty statistical tables on public education, libraries, theatres and shows, as well as publications. The data focused mainly on the number of students enrolled in educational establishments, or on attendance

36 Löhr, *Die Globalisierung geistiger Eigentumsrechte*, Chapter 8.

37 Eric Brian, "Statistique administrative et internationalisme statistique pendant la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle", *Histoire & Mesure* 4, no. 3 (1989): 201–24; Roser Cussó, "La quantification internationale à la lumière de la SSP et des congrès internationaux de statistique: Continuités et ruptures", *Electronic Journal for History of Probability and Statistics* 6, no. 2 (2010): 1–19; Benoit Godin, *La science sous observation: Cent ans de mesure sur les scientifiques 1906–2006* (Sainte-Foy, Québec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2005).

38 Carlo Francesco Ferraris, *Programme pour une statistique internationale de l'enseignement supérieur* (Rome: J. Bertero et Cie, 1903).

39 *League of Nation: Official Journal* 3 (part 2), no. 11 (1922): 1183.

40 "Enquiry into the Conditions of Intellectual Life in Various Countries", Memorandum by the Secretary General, 11 December 1922, UNAG, R1046/13C/25168/23024. For the context of these efforts, see also Irish, *Feeding the Mind*, Chapter 6, esp. 213–14.

41 "Enquiry into the Conditions of Intellectual Life in Various Countries", Brochures, UNAG, File 766261.

42 Julien Luchaire, *Observations sur la méthode d'une statistique de la vie intellectuelle* (Geneva: Société des nations, 1923).

43 Tatiana Berovski-Chestov, *Statistique intellectuelle de la France* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1926).

44 On this partnership, see the IIIC's correspondence with several French actors: UNESCO Archives, AG 01-IICI-B-X-2, IICI0000000721.

at theatres and libraries, but material and even economic aspects were acknowledged, too: the study featured several tables on the budgets of various institutions.

The publication of *La Statistique intellectuelle de la France* was accompanied by the creation of a Mixed Committee on Intellectual Statistics, with participation from both IIIC and the International Statistical Institute (ISI). The latter met for the first time in Paris in November 1926 and adopted a significantly broader work plan than that which had been implemented in the French case.[45] Themes such as cinema, museums and inventions were added to those already adopted. Two further meetings led to the preparation of a report presented by French statistician Lucien March at the 17th session of the ISI in Cairo in December 1927–January 1928. Some sixty model charts were developed for an international survey of various countries. By 1931, some twenty states had responded to the IIIC, but the Institute's reform considerably slowed down the project.[46] The project's creator, Tatiana Chestov, was dismissed from the Institute due to staff cuts.[47] Nevertheless, the IIIC continued its work on a more ad-hoc basis, responding to requests from various organizations.[48] Although the international intellectual statistics project never came to fruition, it provided a basis for work that made the IIIC a major player in the field of international organizations.

Other initiatives reinforced the project to establish a genuine intellectual statistical service. In 1927, the Belgian government's announcement of an exhibition to be held in Liège three years later to commemorate Belgium's centenary gave rise to an exchange with the IIIC. The organizing committee hoped that this event would also be a way of gathering as much documentation as possible on scientific research. Within the ICIC's Science and Bibliography Sub-Committee, the Mathematical, Physical and Natural Sciences Section seized this opportunity. It proposed launching a survey to answer the question "What material resources does scientific research draw on?"[49]

When the sub-committee discussed the survey, all members supported the proposal. For ICIC member Marie Skłodowska-Curie, "this problem" was "one of the most important the sub-committee has to deal with". As she argued, "scientific activity is undergoing an acute crisis, as the need for equipment and personnel has increased, and governments and public opinion are not sufficiently aware of the need to develop the necessary resources".[50] The new survey was therefore a means of bringing the political problem of funding scientific research back into the spotlight. However, the

[45] Commission mixte de statistique intellectuelle, minutes of the first session, 3–6 November 1926. UNESCO Archives, AG01-IICI-B-X-59-1, IICI0000000780. This meeting brought together MP and mathematician Émile Borel (replacing Paul Painlevé); former Belgian minister Jules Destrée; Lucien March, former Director of the Statistique Générale de la France; Coronado Gini, President of the Central Statistical Institute of Italy; Delatour, President of the International Statistical Institute; Julien Luchaire; Prezzolini, Head of the IICI Information and Documentation Section; Tatiana Chestov, Head of the IIIC Analysis Department.

[46] Lucien March, "Note relative à l'état de la statistique intellectuelle", *Bulletin de l'Institut international de statistique* 26, no. 2 (1931): 605–9.

[47] Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 65.

[48] François Simiand, "Note sur la suite à donner aux résolutions concernant la statistique intellectuelle", *Bulletin de l'Institut International de Statistique* 28, no. 2 (1935): 485–7.

[49] Rapport à la sous-commission des sciences et de bibliographie sur l'activité de la section, UNESCO Archives, AG01-IICI-D-VII-26.1, IICI0000001165.

[50] Sous-commission des sciences et de bibliographie, procès-verbal de la séance du vendredi 20 juillet 1928 à 10 heures, UNAG, R2212/5B/706/6214.

project's implementation suffered from the same difficulties as that of intellectual statistics. In the absence of an actual department, the survey was carried out within the IIIC's Scientific Relations Section by Jacob Evert de Vos van Steenwijk, its head, and Charles Mercier, his deputy. Despite material and methodological difficulties, it resulted in a long report presented in July 1930 to the 12th session of the Sub-Committee on Science and Bibliography.[51]

The sub-committee's members warmly received De Vos's report. Its chair, Norwegian biologist Kristine Bonnevie, declared the report to be "one of the most important and interesting that the Institute has presented in several years".[52] Although provisional, the report's findings were striking. First, from a methodological point of view, de Vos highlighted the difficulty of distinguishing between resources linked to higher education and those earmarked for scientific research. Moreover, the importance of funding for applied research was particularly high. Finally, although no one emphasized it, the tables appended to the report revealed disparities that the members of the sub-committee could not fail to notice. Among the 25 countries surveyed for 1930, the United States stood out, with resources six times those of Great Britain and twenty times those of France. Prior to any publication, the survey of resources revealed quite significant differences in the funding of scientific research.

These results were all the more influential as they were not confined to the IIIC or the ICIC. Some of the Institute's contacts were aware of their existence, and did not hesitate to ask the Institute for more information. In the autumn of 1930, Hippolyte Ducos, French rapporteur of the budget for public education, approached the French government to obtain comparative data on French financial efforts in support of scientific research. The French Director of Higher Education, Jacques Cavalier, was aware of the Institute's survey, and asked the IIIC for information and documentation.[53] Despite concerns about possible instrumentalization, the documents were sent to Cavalier, who embarked on his own research to compare the French and Belgian efforts.[54]

Even if it failed to produce definitive results, the survey on the material resources of scientific research fed into political debates on an activity that had been undermined by the economic crisis. In this way, it contributed to an "investment in form" that helped institutionalize scientific research and constituted a first fruitful failure. This is even more evident when set alongside the ICIC and IIIC's efforts in the field of scientific property.[55]

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51 Sous-commission des sciences et de bibliographie, procès-verbal de la séance du 16 juillet 1930.

52 Ibid.

53 Letter from J. Cavalier to J. Luchaire, 27 September 1930, UNESCO Archives, AG01-IICI-D-VII-26.1, IICI0000001165.

54 Confidential note from J. Vos van Steenwijk to J. Luchaire, 1 October 1930, UNESCO Archives, AG01-IICI-D-VII-26.1, IICI0000001165; Letter by the director of Higher Education to the IIIC director, 17 October 1930. Cavalier demonstrated that at in per-capita terms, Belgian efforts were 50 per cent higher than in France.

55 Laurent Thévenot, "Les investissements de forme", in *Conventions économiques*, ed. Laurent Thévenot (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1986), 21–71.

The scientific property campaign

The ICIC and IIIC's concern for the material difficulties faced by scientists was not confined to information and investigation. The objective of improving conditions for intellectual workers encouraged ICIC members to study the possibility of modifying the legal framework. Among the various projects launched, the campaign in favour of an intellectual property system specific to scientific work and discoveries was one of the most significant markers of this dynamic.[56]

The scientists who supported the development of scientific property in France were to take this issue to these new international organizations. At the first session of the ICIC in August 1922, its chairman Henri Bergson pointed to "a very great injustice" in that "the inventor of an application sometimes derives enormous profits from his invention, while the scientist who made the invention possible has no share in these profits".[57] It would appear that Bergson referred the matter to the ICIC at the CTI's request. The French debate then took on a new international dimension, especially as the other committee members proved quite receptive. As shown by Isabella Löhr, a sub-committee was created to handle the question of intellectual property, comprised of Belgian jurist and politician Jules Destrée, American physicist Robert A. Millikan, Italian jurist and senator Francesco Ruffini and Spanish physicist Leonardo Torres Quevedo.[58]

One of the committee's main tasks was to draw up a report about "scientific property". Prepared by Ruffini, the document was presented to the ICIC in August 1923. Ruffini argued for the recognition of an intellectual property specifically related to scientific discovery, distinct from industrial property and literary and artistic property. In Ruffini's view, scientific property was meant to reward the contribution of scientists to economic progress, in contrast to the contemporary situation according to which industrialists were the main beneficiaries. Having been presented to the League Assembly, the report was sent to the various member states for their opinion. Only around thirty countries responded, and only ten voted in favour.

At the same time, other projects appeared. Leonardo Torres Quevedo proposed the creation of a fund financed by a tax on industry to reward scientists and Georges Gariel, deputy director of the Paris Union Office, took up this idea. Work continued throughout 1924 within the ICIC's Sub-Committee on Intellectual Property, which proposed convening a commission of experts to study the question.[59] However, during 1924–25, progress on this issue was limited. In July 1925, the Sub-Committee on Intellectual Property suggested launching a consultation of industrial circles to revitalize the movement.[60] The League Assembly endorsed the suggestion, but asked the ICIC to involve the League's Economic Committee in its work.[61] Initiated by intellectuals and scientists, scientific property became an increasingly important legal and economic issue.

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56 David Philip Miller, "Intellectual Property and Narratives of Discovery/Invention: The League of Nations' Draft Convention on 'Scientific Property' and Its Fate", *History of Science* 46, no. 3 (2008): 299–342; Galvez-Behar, *Posséder la science*, Chapter 6.

57 ICIC, *Procès-verbaux de la première session, Genève 1er – 5 août 1922*, Ninth Session, 5 August 1922, 32, UNAG, C.711.M.423.1922.XII.

58 Löhr, *Die Globalisierung geistiger Eigentumsrechte*, 191–8.

59 Ibid.

60 IIIC, Minutes of the Sub-Committee on Intellectual Property, 22 July 1925, UNESCO Archives, AG01-IICI-CICI-PI, box IICI 535.

61 Yann Decorzant, *La Société des Nations et la naissance d'une conception de la régulation économique internationale* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2011).

The IIIC's creation in 1925 accelerated the project. Within the Institute, the Legal Section played a major role in the debates. Raymond Weiss – son of one of the great figures of international law, André Weiss – was the section's linchpin. He was supported by Marcel Plaisant, a French intellectual property lawyer and member of parliament. In addition to the efforts of particular individuals, the IIIC's status meant that it worked closely with other institutions linked to the League, such as the ILO and the Economic Committee. Based in Paris, the Institute was also able to collaborate with other international institutions such as the International Chamber of Commerce.

Strong opposition came from business circles. While the League's Economic Committee contested the Institute's method, the International Chamber of Commerce echoed the views of industrial organizations. The IIIC nevertheless stayed the course and convened a committee of experts in December 1927 to draw up a preliminary draft international convention. Far less ambitious than the Ruffini draft, it was rejected by more than two-thirds of the forty or so countries that had taken a stance on the issue.

However, things were moving forward on the national front. In France, in May 1927, a committee was set up to prepare a preliminary draft law concerning the authors of scientific discoveries or inventions. It gathered several jurists and senior civil servants, as well as the director of the Museum of Natural History and the physicist Paul Langevin. During 1927, the commitee drew up a text. In early 1928, an interministerial commission was set up to turn this text into a bill.[62] Among this later commission's members were the mathematician and member of parliament Émile Borel, Marcel Plaisant, Paul Langevin and Marie Curie: by dealing with the same topic in two different bodies and at two different levels, these actors played an essential role.

Several members of this interministerial commission turned to the IIIC and especially to Weiss for additional support. The early 1930s saw an intensification of relations between the IIIC and French scientists involved in promoting scientific property. Raymond Weiss collaborated with Marie Curie to prepare a speech on scientific property to the French Chemical Society.[63] Curie tried, with some success, to promote the issue within the Académie de Médecine. Émile Borel also asked the IIIC's Legal Section for information. A de-facto convergence was established between the Institute, which was trying to promote scientific property at the international level, and the scientific players who were trying to make headway in France. In May 1931, a sub-committee devoted to the rights of scientists and the recruitment of researchers was set up within the French National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation.[64] It gave rise to interesting discussions, in which two different conceptions of scientific property came into conflict: an individualistic one, linking scientific property result to the individual scientist; and a collective one, where science had to be financed globally by industry.[65]

62 "Droit des auteurs de découvertes ou inventions scientifiques", *Journal officiel de la République française*, 19 and 20 March 1928, 3059.

63 Manuscripts, Fonds Pierre et Marie Curie, NAF 18463, folio 151–152, letter from 15 January 1931, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, *Making Marie Curie: Intellectual Property and Celebrity in the Age of Information* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2015).

64 "Commissions nationales de coopération intellectuelle", *La Coopération intellectuelle*, no. 5 (May 1931): 231.

65 Commission française de coopération intellectuelle – Feuille d'information – no. 14 (May 1934), UNESCO Archives, IICI 182.

Ultimately, no international convention on scientific property was adopted between the wars. Nor was any legislation passed in France. From this point of view, mobilization, which continued until the eve of the Second World War, was a failure.[66] Yet things are more complex. In France, the debate on scientific property fuelled discussions on the financing of science, which led to other reforms.[67] Internationally, the failure must also be qualified in view of the results of the 1934 Paris Union Revision Conference.[68] The latter gave rise to important debates on two subjects linked to scientific property: the inventor's moral rights and the status of scientific communications for the validity of patents. While no agreement was reached on the second point, despite strong initiatives from France and Italy, the first was sanctioned by Article 4 *quinquies* of the revised Paris Union Convention. According to the new provision, the inventor had the right to have their name mentioned in a patent, even though this latter belonged to his employer. It represented a symbolic but essential step in the recognition of intellectual work that had inspired the proponents of scientific property. As in the case of the surveys, the campaign in favour of scientific property had raised the profile of the problem of funding scientific research. It also led to some progress, albeit minor in relation to the initial objective, on the legal front.

Conclusion

The League bodies for intellectual cooperation certainly did not meet their ambitious objectives regarding the support they could provide to intellectual workers. Not only did the surveys fail to establish a homogeneous and regular framework of analysis, but the plans for an international convention on scientific property did not succeed either. In some respects, this points to a failure on the part of the intellectual cooperation community. However, there are several reasons why such a conclusion would be wrong. First, it should be remembered that issues relating to intellectual workers was not an obvious field of action for the ICIC, even at its inception. The fact that its members were able to impose such items on the agenda was a success that enabled this unprecedented Institution to embark on other projects.

Moreover, it was the work carried out in the preparation of surveys and the drafting of conventions that was a notable achievement: not only because no official international organization had previously carried out such work, but also because this activity produced non-negligible collateral effects. The surveys of intellectual life produced in the 1920s did give rise to publications. The resources survey was part of a wider debate about the funding of science. The initiatives on scientific property led to progress both in legal terms – albeit minimal – and in ideological terms on the status of scientific research. As a result, the ICIC and the IIIC established themselves as key institutions for the institutionalization of scientific research between the two World Wars. In this respect, they were a fruitful failure.

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66 An international coordination of intellectual property rights was, apparently, underway: "La coordination internationale des droits intellectuels", *La Coopération intellectuelle*, no. 53–4 (May–June 1935): 308. The question was raised again on the occasion of the world exhibition in Paris in 1937.

67 Gabriel Galvez-Behar, "Institutional Enterprise as a Compromise: The National Organization of Science in France", *Management & Organizational History* 12, no. 3 (2017): 237–60.

68 Union internationale pour la protection de la propriété industrielle, *Actes de la Conférence réunie à Londres du 1er mai au 2 juin 1934*, Berne, 1934.

4

The Production of Consensus and Legitimacy on Educational Questions:

An Emerging Field of Action in the League's Intellectual Cooperation Organization

Xavier Riondet

According to functionalist readings, international organizations contribute to the regulation of relations between states, but they can also be considered as "possible places of international production", in which norms capable of universalization are developed.[1] However, this perspective depends on the institutional work taking place within such networks, because intellectual life is not spontaneously international or pacifist.[2] Inspired by post-war pacifist currents and concerned with fighting against warmongering in education, the League of Nations' bodies for intellectual cooperation embarked on a process of institutionalization in order to structure national and transnational practices of cooperation between intellectuals.[3] This development was characterized by permanent tensions between the forces already at work and the forces working for change in the way intellectual cooperation was being organized.[4]

Several studies have considered discussions and decisions about education in the League of Nations.[5] This chapter makes a distinct contribution to this body of literature by reconstructing the actual interactions of expert members and officials in a specific institutional area. The discussion proceeds in several steps. The chapter first discusses the reorganization of the League bodies for intellectual cooperation, which created the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (ICO), and examines the implications for the League's work on education and the revision of textbooks. It then focuses on the negotiation processes and tensions that accompanied the collective endeavours in this field, before finally analysing the concrete work on educational matters during the early 1930s.

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1 Sandrine Kott, "Les organisations internationales, terrains d'étude de la globalisation: Jalons pour une approche socio-historique guerres", *Critique internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 9–16.

2 Pierre Bourdieu, "Les conditions sociales de la circulation internationales des idées", *Actes de la Recherche en Sciences Sociales*, no. 145 (2002): 3.

3 Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle* (1919–1946) (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999); Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, University of Lausanne, 2018); Martin Grandjean, "The Paris/Geneva Divide: A Network Analysis of the Archives of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations", in *Culture as Soft Power: Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Elisabet Carbó-Catalan (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 65–98; Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 51–67.

4 René Lourau, *L'analyse institutionnelle* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1969).

5 Ken Osborne, "Creating the 'International Mind': The League of Nations' Attempts to Reform History Teaching, 1920–1939", *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2016): 213–40; Eckhardt Fuchs, "The Creation of the New International Network in Education: The League of Nations and Education Organizations in the 1920s", *Paedagogica Historica* 43, no. 2 (2007): 199–209.

The reorganization of intellectual cooperation within the League of Nations

In September 1931, the Assembly of the League of Nations formalized the creation of the ICO. The main challenge in this context was to coordinate its constituent elements in a way that would form a coherent institutional whole.[6] Reforms mainly concerned the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC), as its legitimacy had been contested in the late 1920s.[7] The reorganization transformed the IIIC into the executive organ of the ICO. Now directed by Henri Bonnet, the IIIC favoured the recruitment of young civil servants and the "internationalization of competent staff".[8] However, even prior to this institutional reform, many actions and discussions had taken place across various networks, within the associations of specialists from various fields, pacifist circles and also in international institutions. It is important, therefore, to explore this period of transition, between the first tentative steps in intellectual cooperation and the reorganization of 1931, which produced a new mandate on educational questions.

The League bodies on intellectual cooperation were already concerned with educational issues in the 1920s. In 1925, the Casares Resolution created a procedure that was designed to contribute to the revision of textbooks.[9] It accorded a specific role to the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation: it suggested that when a textbook was deemed to undermine mutual understanding between two countries, the relevant commissions should contact each other to consider potential changes to the contentious elements.[10] Textbook revision thus operated through intermediaries, leaving the actual discussions and actions to representatives from the respective countries.

In 1926, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) established a Sub-Committee of Experts for the Teaching of the Aims and Principles of the League of Nations to Youth, hereafter referred to as the "Youth Committee" – a term that was also used at the time, even though it made its mission seem wider than it was. The Youth Committee's members were to be chosen for their experience and expertise as educators or civil servants in school administrations.[11] They met in Geneva, preparing recommendations that were to be reported to the Council of the League of Nations. Their overarching task was to identify "the methods most likely to accustom the younger generations to regard international co-operation as the normal mode of conducting world affairs".[12] In the beginning, the Youth Committee brought together various existing proposals, for instance on measures to influence public opinion. Moreover, in July 1930, it asked the ICIC to consider the possibility of investigating school books (history, geography, civic and moral instruction, among

6 Xavier Riondet, "L'Institut international de coopération intellectuelle: comment promouvoir un enseignement répondant à l'idéal internationaliste (1931–1937)?", *Relations internationales* 183, no. 3 (2020): 77–93.

7 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 77–91.

8 Jean-Jacques Renoliet, "L'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle (1919–1940)" (PhD thesis, University of Paris I, 1995), 662.

9 Rita Hofstetter and Xavier Riondet, "International Institutions, Pacifism, and the Attack on Warmongering Textbooks", in *Textbooks and War: Historical and Multinational Perspectives*, ed. Eckhardt Fuchs and E. Roldán (Cham: Palgrave, 2018), 201–32; Xavier Riondet, "La résolution Casarès, ou les premiers pas difficiles de la Coopération Intellectuelle au sujet des manuels scolaires (1925–1939)", in *L'internationalisme éducatif entre débats et combats (1919–1939)*, ed. Rita Hofstetter and Joëlle Droux (Bern: Peter Lang, 2020), 141–71.

10 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 304.

11 Among the members of this sub-committee, we can mention Luis A. Baralt, Bogdan Gavrilovitch, Inazō Nitobe, Paul Lapie, Wilhelm Schellberg, Giuseppe Gallavresi, Peter Munch, Constantin Kiritzesco and S. N. Chaturvedi.

12 Destrée Report, modified text of the Youth Committee's recommendations, 18 June 1929, UNESCO Archives, C.I.C.I./E.J./24.

other subjects) that were being used across different countries.[13] In the Youth Committee's view, this project was an opportunity to show that the revision of textbooks had started and to encourage governments to carry out their own self-assessments.

During the 12th session of the ICIC – held at the end of July 1930, during a period of economic and political crisis – several decisive exchanges focused on educational questions. The ICIC member (and former French prime minister) Paul Painlevé insisted on two approaches: "positive", that is to encourage productions marked by the spirit of the League; and "negative", to flush out mistakes and errors in textbooks.[14] After several days of meetings, the committee's secretary conceded that education had until then been approached "indirectly".[15] The ICIC was faced with a collective difficulty: officially claiming a mandate on education when this mandate was within the states' domain and not included in the initial programme of the League's intellectual cooperation activities. The French position favoured League work on education and a place for the French-led IIIC within it. This position was supported, indirectly, by several protagonists, who believed that the IIIC should report on what had been achieved on these issues. It was another Frenchman, Louis Gallié, who encouraged the IIIC to establish contact with various teachers' networks.[16]

The scope of the IIIC's educational mandate was the source of extensive debate. After some discussion, the ICIC president Gilbert Murray noted "agreement on the fact that the Committee must deal with primary education".[17] Murray initially proposed that the League's Centre of School Information (Centre d'information scolaire) co-organize the preparation of the report in question with the IIIC.[18] If there was indeed French pressure to maintain responsibilities for the IIIC as part of the wider institutional arrangements for intellectual cooperation, it nevertheless appeared easier to ask the future director of the IIIC to expend energy on these questions rather than to add another mission to the Geneva branch of the Centre of School Information. Although the International Bureau of Education (IBE; Bureau international d'éducation) had begun its work on educational questions, the mandate returned to the IIIC.[19] Created in Geneva in 1925 by the Rousseau Institute with the aim of building peace through the progress of science and education, the IBE was interested in the reform of history teaching from the 1920s. However, collaboration with intellectual cooperation institutions was initially complex, because in its early days the IBE was sometimes seen as an international association of educators like others that maintained contact with the Youth Committee, and at other times as a documentation centre.[20]

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13 Youth Committee, Minutes of the third session, 5th meeting in Geneva, Resolution III, 5 July 1930. United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), CICI/EJ/3e session/PV5.

14 Painlevé was member of ICIC from 1926 to 1933.

15 ICIC, Minutes of the 12th ICIC session in Geneva, 23 to 29 July 1930, 80, UNAG C.428.M.92.1930.XII. The minutes of this session do not mention the name of the secretary. It may have been Albert Dufour-Feronce or Georges Oprescu.

16 Gallié participated as general secretary of the International Confederation of Intellectual Workers. During his intervention, he mentioned the International Congress of Intellectual Workers, the International Federation of Teachers' Associations and the International Federation of Secondary Teachers

17 ICIC, Minutes of the 12th session, July 1930, 82, UNAG, C.428.M.92.1930.XII.

18 Ibid., 78. The Centre of School Information had been the outcome of discussions within the ICIC that had taken place in 1927 but operated within the IIIC: see Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 302–3.

19 Hofstetter and Riondet, "International Institutions", 201–32.

20 Ultimately, in the 1930s, the IBE gradually transformed into an intergovernmental agency. On the IBE, see Rita Hofstetter and ÉRHISE, *Le Bureau international d'éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle)* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2022); Emeline Brylinski, "Recommander l'utopie? Construction d'une coopération intergouvernementale par le Bureau International d'Éducation au milieu du 20e siècle" (PhD thesis, University of Geneva, 2022); Rita Hofstetter and Bernard Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education (1925–1968): "The Ascent from the Individuel to the Universal"* (Cham: Palgrave, 2024).

The League Assembly let the ICIC take on the preparation of the investigation and left it to its discretion whether to contact associations, national committees and governments. The archives of the various meetings linked to the intellectual cooperation bodies show that the actors regularly sought the approval of the League bodies. Nevertheless, the actors' debates also show a recurring desire to go beyond the limits of the scope of action for various reasons, encompassing personal, collective, political, professional and diplomatic issues.

New procedures and the establishment of a new type of expert committee

With this mandate on education, the League of Nations confirmed its status as a player on a subject area in which complex social processes were already underway.[21] While the framework for investigations was set by the ICIC (in dialogue with the League Assembly), the IIIC was responsible for the documentation work. This endeavour consisted of listing all the actions on school textbooks in each national context – regardless of whether they were carried out by governments or private individuals and associations – as well as the compilation of an inventory of the national institutional frameworks governing the development of manuals.

The report was more than a simple inventory of decisions: it also presented the specificities of the educational regulatory context of each state as well as a map of the actors involved in the revision of textbooks. This substantial document of several hundred pages – whose production had been entrusted to IIIC staff member Margarete Rothbarth – was part of a collective institutional circuit, because the IIIC report provided the basis for a committee of experts that would propose "appropriate means of action" to the ICIC.[22] The creation of a committee of experts who specialized in textbooks was far from insignificant within the context evolving approach to intellectual cooperation. The terminology and use of "committees of experts" provided more flexibility than other types of commissions. In 1931, the formation of such a committee with specialists on textbooks coincided with the wider reorganization of intellectual cooperation within the League. The committee was designed as a space to analyse, propose and validate recommendations. This situation responded to an initial imbalance: scientific authority regarding the subject matter of school textbooks[23] was not a particular area of interest for the Casares Resolution or for the Youth Committee, whose mission was more political than scientific.[24] The constitution of a committee featuring experts on textbooks was therefore an important step in building scientific legitimacy and international consensus.

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21 Mona L. Siegel, *The Moral Disarmament of France: Education, Pacifism, and Patriotism, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

22 Ute Lemke, "Les combats de l'historienne allemande Margarete Rothbarth (1887 Francfort/Main–1953 Zurich): Une dissidente en exil – une apatride contre la Société des Nations", in *Femmes face à l'Etat: Allemagne, Espagne, France, XIXe–XXe siècles*, ed. Stéphanie Chapuis-Després et Florence Serrano (Chambéry: Presses Universitaires Savoie Mont Blanc, 2021), 173–90.

23 This aspect in particular concerned historians as disputes often involved history textbooks.

24 Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 206.

Between formal functioning and real functioning: the practice of delegation

Official documents suggested a very formal functioning and made the ICO appear like an asymmetrical organization built around a central power. However, when looking behind the scenes, the picture becomes more complex. The creation of a delegation from the Youth Committee illustrates different forces at work. Its chair convened a delegation based on a decision of the League Council. There were many changes between the Youth Committee's reconstitution in 1930 – with the request to investigate textbook matters, and hence going beyond the body's initial task of dealing with the "Teaching of the Aims and Principles of the League of Nations to Youth" – and the convocation of a delegation to deal with this issue.[25] The multiplication of groups and institutions, and decreasing financial resources, had some consequences, including a reduction in the number of invitations for participation in the delegation.[26]

Several exchanges preceded the delegation's first official session.[27] The constitution of the delegation followed a particular trajectory. In March 1931, Armi Hallsten-Kallia wrote to ICIC chair Gilbert Murray about the individuals she expected to be part of the delegation.[28] Murray responded to these first suggestions, and took decisions on the final list of members.[29] During the behind-the-scenes discussions on membership, it was also decided that, based on members' suggestions, further individuals could participate as long as they funded their own participation. In July 1931, the delegation met in Geneva and featured Gilbert Murray, Jules Destrée, Laura Dreyfus-Barney, Giuseppe Gallavresi, Théodore Rosset, Wilhelm Schellberg, S. N. Seshadri, P. T. Shen and Alfred Zimmern. Several representatives of international institutions also participated: Mack Eastman, for the International Labour Office; Henri Bonnet, Jean Mohr and Daniel Secrétan for the IIIC as well as Albert Dufour-Feronce, Jean-Daniel de Montenach, Gustave Kullmann and Armi Hallsten-Kallia for the League Secretariat.

The delegates discussed textbooks during their first session.[30] Two members, Destrée and Gallavresi, opened the discussion, presenting their views on the potential improvement and extension of the Casares Procedure. To them, these arrangements suggested the potential of promoting mutual understanding, with a particular role for historians as they deemed them most qualified to deal with many of the textbook issues in question – notably the question of how to represent contested historical events. IIIC director Bonnet, meanwhile, stressed the role that teachers could play in lobbying publishers. The debates revealed the need to look for the reasons behind the disappointing results of the Casares Procedure and to reflect on the constitution of an international library of school textbooks emanating from the International Committee of Historical Sciences (CISH,

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25 The following personalities were present during these sessions: Murray, Baralt, Dreyfuys-Barney, Gallavresi, Inaganki (substitute of Nitobe), Kiritzescco, Lebrun (substitute of Rosset), Munch, Schellberg, Eastman, Bouglé, Zimmern, Dufour-Feronce, Oprescu and Kallia.

26 "Procès-verbal de la 4ème séance de la Troisième session du Comité exécutif de la CICI", 11 April 1931, 5, UNAG, CICI/Com Ex/8 avril 1931.

27 Letter from Laura Clifford Dreyfus-Barney to Albert Dufour-Feronce, 5 January 1931, UNAG, R2269/5C/26769/2422.

28 Letter from Hallsten-Kallia to Murray, 5 March 1931, UNAG, R2269/5C/26769/2422..

29 Letter from Murray to Hallsten-Kallia, 9 March 1931, UNAG, R2269/5C/26769/2422.

30 Délégation du sous-Comité d'experts pour l'enseignement à la jeunesse des buts de la SDE, Provisional minutes of the first meeting in Geneva, 3 July 1931, UNAG, CICI/EJ/Délégation.1ère session/PV1.

Comité internationale des sciences historiques), an international association created in 1926, of which several members were already working on the issue of textbook reform.[31]

The possibility of requesting the "constitution of a body of doctrine" from the League on school textbooks was also mentioned during the debates. It was once again Bonnet who asked the delegation to validate the idea of a committee of experts whose members would be responsible for making suggestions on these questions on the basis of the report. Bonnet proposed the participation of two members of CISH's Commission on the Teaching of History in this new committee.

In the afternoon, Laura Dreyfus-Barney, who represented the International Council of Women and the Committee of Understanding of Major International Associations, wondered whether the delegation needed to debate the issue further before members of the committee of experts were contacted.[32] Murray acknowledged the difficulty of "determining what action to take" from the report. After some discussion, he noted "general agreement" on several points but recognized that "the Casares Procedure, despite its value, only relates to one aspect of the problem". For Murray, there was a common desire to "glorify war less and discourage hatred between nations". In this context, he saw academic historians "as the best ally", especially as they "recognize that the old historical style was not only childish, but professionally inadequate". At the end of the session, he therefore specified that the future committee of textbooks experts would include representatives from the discipline of history, secondary education, the Youth Committee, and various international academic institutions. IIIC deputy-director Zimmern suggested the inclusion of a historian of science on the committee to ensure sensitivity to the question of scientific revolutions. These discussions about textbooks were part of a wider discussion on the role of National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation, the relations between international associations and the League, as well as the structure of documentation centres. These exchanges took place within the context of a warning note from Jean-Daniel de Montenach of the League Secretariat: the scope of the Youth Committee was to teach young people the goals of the League of Nations and not to make recommendations on general educational matters.

A few days later, Murray's report to the ICIC described the delegation's work.[33] The first lines placed more emphasis on the names of the personalities who had taken part in the discussions than on the names of the representatives of the IIIC and the League Secretariat. Regarding the revision of school textbooks, the document insisted on the need to improve the functioning of the Casares Resolution so that it would be used more and yield more concrete results.[34] The delegation believed that Rothbarth's report should be submitted to a "restricted committee of experts" with the mission to

[31] On this body, see Karl Dietrich Erdmann, *Toward Global Community of Historians: The International Congresses and the International Committee of Historical Sciences 1898–2000* (New York: Berghahn, 2005); Agnès Blänsdorf, "'Une collaboration scientifique dans un esprit vraiment œcuménique et international': Les congrès internationaux d'historiens et le Comité International des Sciences Historiques dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Revue germanique internationale* 12, (2010): 209–28; Matthias Middell and Katja Naumann, "Historians and International Organizations: The International Committee of Historical Sciences", in *International Organizations and Global Civil Society: Histories of the Union of International Associations*, ed. Daniel Laqua, Wouter Van Acker and Christophe Verbruggen (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 133–51.

[32] Délégation du sous-Comité d'experts pour l'enseignement à la jeunesse des buts de la SDE, Provisional minutes of the second meeting in Geneva, 3 July 1931, UNAG, CICI/EJ/Délégation.1ère session/PV2.

[33] Report on Geneva meeting by the delegation presented by Gilbert Murray to ICIC (Youth Committee, limited meeting), 10 July 1931, UNAG, CICI/Com./Ex.24.

[34] From 1925 to 1930, the resolution was used to a very limited extend. Its results were mixed when compared to the initial goal, that is, to allow the textbooks revision and to promote mutual understanding.

"recommend, drawing on the experience acquired, the most appropriate means of action".[35] The report formalized the delegation's request that the ICIC convene a committee, expressing the opinion that it could be composed of representatives from CISH, educators' associations, institutes dedicated to the study of international relations and from the Youth Committee.[36] The executive committee of the ICIC subsequently approved the presentation, transmitted Murray's report to the ICIC and recommended that it adopt the conclusions.[37] We can observe that the ICIC thus took ownership of this work. While the work of the delegation appeared as a collective producing consensus by depersonalizing the positions of its members, it was within this body that the overall position seems to have been defined.

Composing the committee of textbook experts

Most of the personalities who composed the committee of textbook experts were linked to the existing networks that underpinned the League's work in the field of intellectual cooperation. The balance of national representation was a major criterion, and the choice of experts was subject to negotiation. The IIIC received various proposals and sometimes the IIIC's response was that its Executive Committee – in other words, the ICIC – was "the only one qualified to appoint experts".[38] Before this communication, some of these proposals had already been circulating behind the scenes. Certain discussions began in 1930 with a letter from the French historian Gustave Glotz, who wrote to the ICIC on behalf of CISH.[39] Another letter to the ICIC, from CISH's Commission on the Teaching of History – co-signed by Glotz and the German historian Otto Brandt – testifies to this rapprochement between the historical community and the ICIC, in parallel with the reorganization of the IOC.[40] Like the earlier exchanges between the IIIC and these networks as part of the IIIC documentary survey about textbooks, these relationships predated the meetings and decisions of the IIIC's Executive Committee.[41]

Furthermore, the role of the delegation from the Youth Committee was complex. The delegation requested that the ICIC decide on the convening of the committee of textbook experts but itself made proposals on its composition. This was therefore a paradoxical situation: according to the theoretical principle of delegation, a few individuals should represent and intervene according to an original group, but in practice, the principle of delegation actually gives full power to a few actors.[42] Henri Bonnet is an interesting example. With the formation of the ICO, the IIIC – which had previously been criticized for having too much autonomy – was inserted into an instiutionalized collective with formalized rules. However, the new IIIC director was part of the delegation that discussed the future work on textbook reform, and he actively participated in the choice of experts as if he had a special status within the collective. Bonnet sought the opinions of de Montenach and Murray regarding this question and communicated with Attilio Rossi, intervening as "acting director".

35 Report on Geneva meeting, 10 July 1931 (see footnote 33).

36 Ibid., 4.

37 Youth Committee, Note by the Secretary of the Committee, 16 July 1931, UNAG, R2269/5C/26769/2422.

38 Letter from Attilio Rossi to Georges Lapierre, 14 November 1931, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

39 Letter from Gustave Glotz to George Oprescu, 1 October 1930, UNAG, R227275C/23106/5863.

40 Letter from the Committee on History Teaching to Gilbert Murray, 1 April 1931, UNAG, R227275C/23106/5863.

41 Letter from Henri Bonnet to Jean-Daniel de Montenach, 2 May 1931, UNAG, R227275C/23106/5863.

42 Pierre Bourdieu, *Langage et pouvoir symbolique* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 260.

In this context, choosing one personality for the future expert committee also meant giving up another. Three educators were initially proposed by the International Federation of Educators' Associations (Fédération internationale des associations d'instituteurs, FIAI): Georges Lapierre from France; Georg Wolff from Germany and Ernst Bjerke from Sweden.[43] Lapierre was the FIAI's secretary and had produced several reports on school textbooks. Wolff was the president of the German Association of Teachers (Deutscher Lehrerverein). It was Bjerke, the vice-president of the Sverges Folkskollärarförbund (Swedish Association of Primary School Teachers), who ended up being chosen, probably to avoid the over-representation of France and Germany while also drawing on Nordic interest in textbook revision. In some cases, the choice preceded discussions. Bonnet recognized, for example, that it was unthinkable that the author of the Casares Resolution would not be invited. As Julio Casares was no longer a member of the Youth Committee, he was invited as a "representative of this Committee of which he had been a member for a long time".[44] Finally, the choices could also be based on other specific criterion. This was the case with Eileen Power, a British historian close to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom who, to Bonnet, appeared to be non-nationalist, and for Murray was "both 'bien pensante' and extremely intelligent".[45]

In the end, the committee of textbooks experts was composed of seven personalities: apart from Ernst Bjerke, Julio Casares and Eileen Power, they were Otto Brandt (professor at the University of Erlangen and secretary of CISH's committee on history teaching), Gustave Glotz (member of the Institute of France, professor at the University of Paris and president of CISH's committee on history teaching), Jean Piaget (director of the International Bureau of Education) and Bruno Vignola (inspector at the Directorate General of Secondary Education in Italy). The composition of this group presents three particularities. It was an international committee, but also very "European". With six men and one woman, its composition was male-dominated, which is all the more striking as women played significant roles in educational internationalism during the interwar years.[46] Finally, even if a majority of historians made up this list, this group was structured around the notion of "didactic transposition", that is the process of transforming scientific knowledge or a social practice into an object to be taught, and one with which students must work and which they must learn.[47] In this committee, we find individuals who were experts in certain areas of historical knowledge that were being studied in schools; individuals participating in networks with an influence on the curricula and individuals who taught this knowledge in the classroom. The list indeed included historians, but also officials, a teacher and a psychologist. This specialized committee was therefore underpinned by two pillars of legitimacy: international representativeness and educational expertise.[48]

43 Letter from Louis Dumas to Attilio Rossi, 16 November 1931, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

44 Letter from Henri Bonnet to Jean-Daniel de Montenach, 12 October 1931, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

45 Letter from Gilbert Murray to Henri Bonnet, 26 October 1931, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

46 Joyce Goodman, "Women and International Intellectual Co-operation', *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 3 (2012): 357–68; Ute Lemke, "'La femme, la clandestine de l'histoire': Margarete Rothbarth – ein Engagement für den Völkerbund", *Lendemains* 47, no. 146 (2012): 45–58; Marie-Élise Hunyadi, *L'Accès des femmes aux études universitaires: L'engagement de la Fédération internationale des femmes diplômées des universités* (1919–1970) (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2024).

47 Yves Chevallard, *La transposition didactique: Du savoir savant au savoir enseigné* (Grenoble: La pensée sauvage, 1985).

48 There were specialists in history research, specialists of history teaching and specialists of child psychology.

The behind-the-scenes analysis makes several important elements visible, beyond questions of internal communication. First of all, it shows that the operating rules were the result of a complex collective undertaking. Secondly, we can observe how the very formal functioning of the institutions and decision-making coexisted with different, less formal and less visible processes. Thirdly, the decisions were presented as collective ones, despite the decisive influence of certain individuals.

The committee of experts on textbooks: first exchanges and internal debates

The committee of experts for the revision of textbooks did not have the mandate to set ICO policy on textbooks directly. Instead, there was a complex process, including individual pronouncements by experts, the determination of a shared position and, ultimately, the question of whether this might contribute to the ICO's broader agenda. The first of these steps – namely the articulation of individual positions – is something we can trace by looking at the responses of three individuals who had been invited to join the expert committee on textbooks, Bruno Vignola, Jean Piaget and Ernst Bjerke.

First, Vignola expressed some reservations, dissociating himself from calls – both within and outside the committee – in favour of an international institution that would control the contents of textbooks. The Italian official wrote that the actions had to be carried out with "the approval of the respective governments" as an extension of a project resolution formulated by the Youth Committee in 1930.[49] According to Vignola, the work had to focus on errors, omissions linked to history, geography and civilizations, and judgments unfavourable to countries. Furthermore, the creation of a collection of the most used textbooks would help influence future practices, and Vignola thought that sub-committees under each National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation could operate in conjunction with representatives of national CISH and representatives of the Ministry of Public Education.[50]

Second, Jean Piaget identified two means for revising textbooks: *negative* means, which meant to eliminate problematic passages; and *positive* means that would focus on educational techniques. Piaget wanted to strengthen the Casares Procedure through the establishment of an arbitration commission. The psychologist also added that "the manual is not everything in teaching"; for him, it was important to think about other aspects, including training in critical thinking. This point would require an investigation to identify educational recommendations[51].

Finally, Bjerke considered a global coordination effort necessary because there were many interlocutors on questions of peace education. For him, the situation required textbooks with content promoting mutual understanding between countries and a teaching staff convinced by these principles of peace and reconciliation of peoples. As part of this, he proposed sending circulars to ministries and professional organizations and a project to write a manual on the League of Nations.[52]

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49 Letter from Bruno Vignola to Henri Bonnet, 18 January 1932, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

50 For Vignola, it was not possible to think about textbooks revision without the involvement of the authorities, including the Ministry of Public Instruction.

51 Letter from Jean Piaget to Henri Bonnet, 20 January 1932, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

52 Letter from Ernst Bjerke to Attilio Rossi, 4 February 1932, UNESCO Archives, 272/I.II.3.

Each of these approaches touched upon key themes: content, educational attitudes, relationship to history, organization of collective work, institutional and political issues. Two further questions implicitly appeared: were the experts going to agree on specific aspects of the textbook revision? And what decisions could the ICO make on the basis of these different reflections and recommendations?

The report's reception and the rewriting of resolutions

The committee of experts for the revision of textbooks met on 15–16 February 1932. Gustave Glotz chaired the debates, and the initial agenda included four points: a discussion of the IIIC's report, an inventory of the use of the Casares Resolution, an examination of existing measures and miscellaneous issues.[53] Two individuals who had not been on the initial list of selected members were present, in each case with a specific purpose: Rafael Altamira, a Spanish professor, historian and judge at the Permanent Court of International Justice, wished to discuss recent actions in the Americas and Spain; and Georges Lapierre, a French educator and member of the FIAI, desired a review of results obtained by associations of educators.

The committee of experts reported on the discussions and noted two particular wishes: the first, following a proposal from Piaget, encouraged studying textbooks' psychological effects on the minds of children; the second invited the creation of a collection of the school books most generally used in different countries, with the participation of CISH's Commission on the Teaching of History. The circulation of this report quickly generated tensions. Brandt wrote to Bonnet, because he wanted to be associated with the second proposal, and demanded that his name appear in the final version in the same way as Piaget's name was associated to one of the wishes produced by this committee. This letter allows us to understand that the actors at the heart of these collective processes could defend positions determined by their professional context (historian, educator, teacher), their national origin (playing the card of their nation), institutional issues (guaranteeing the presence and the prerogatives of an institution) but also personal interests. In parallel with this report, a document bringing together seven draft resolutions was sent to the IIIC.

The first resolution completed the framework for future uses of the Casares Procedure, seeking to broaden its field of application (beyond history and geography books). It also asked National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation to communicate the list of textbooks used and report on the evolution of the measures in place to choose textbooks. The second resolution called for a more explicit positioning on the part of the League of Nations, demanding that it issue recommendations and encourage better coordination between governments, specialized bodies, educational museums, national documentation centres and practitioners. The third resolution took note of the actions of certain associations of educators and called for the mobilization of international associations to revise textbooks and exercise influence in national contexts where the situation required it. The fourth resolution sought to extend the work of identifying books in use in different national contexts. The committee thought, for example, that the IIIC could gather documentation for governments on the subject of private initiatives deployed on these issues. The fifth resolution went beyond the committee's remit as it recalled the importance of teaching history in training young generations for peace and encouraged textbooks written with international understanding in mind. The sixth

[53] The report was titled: "Rapport documentaire et préparatoire à l'Enquête Projetée sur les manuels scolaires contenant des passages nuisibles à la compréhension mutuelle" and was presented as the documentation necessary for the expert committee.

resolution encouraged the study of the psychological effects produced by textbooks, while the final resolution called for the creation of collections of manuals with the contribution of specialist communities so that these collections would be available to the ICIC.

Further rewriting

After the meeting of the committee of experts on textbook revision, matters returned to the delegation that had instigated the creation of this committee. In July 1932, the Youth Committee delegation considered the resolution, but its composition had changed, creating some misunderstandings.[54] Chaired by Destrée, the discussions were a continuation of the Conference on the Teaching of History held in 1932 at The Hague under the presidency of Rafael Altamira, after several collective discussions at the International Congress of Moral Education in 1930.[55] Gallavresi spoke up. For him, there was no need to create a new body because there was already the IIIC, the League Secretariat and a historical sciences committee (namely CISH). He insisted on the positioning of several personalities in favour of a change in the content of history books. While Margarete Rothbarth presented and commented on the report and the resolutions to the delegation, it was mainly Schellberg who examined the resolutions. For Schellberg, who had been Ministry Advisor of Public Education of Prussia, the resolutions were based on correct theoretical and practical considerations, but he wanted clarification that the expression "school textbooks", which featured in the first resolution, had a broad meaning and also wanted to extend the census to private schools.[56] On other points, Bonnet's clarifications made it possible to adhere to the existing proposals, rather than going any further. Regarding the other resolutions, Schellberg made several comments: he recommended the formation of a special committee responsible for examining school textbooks within the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation and regretted that reflections were limited to textbooks without considering the question of teaching. He expressed his desire for a preamble that would mention the importance of teachers' personal attitudes as well as changes that were to be encouraged in the latter respect.

Following this feedback and various proposals for rewriting, the president proposed that a "small committee" take up these suggestions to reformulate the terms of the resolutions. During this meeting, several members of the delegation spoke on key aspects and provided some recent information related to the content of the resolutions. For example, Bonnet reacted to the request for a collection of manuals, arguing for the IIIC to be entrusted with this task. Several members intervened in the discussions. The Serbian biologist Ivan Đaja explained that the issue of textbook revision was of particular interest to the Balkan countries. Rothbarth explained that several National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation had created specialist sub-committees.[57] Zimmern added that Piaget would be most qualified to lead the investigation into the psychological effects; this proposal was immediately tempered by Bonnet, who did not wish for the document to become too detailed. It was finally decided

[54] Letter from de Montenach to Shen (Youth Committee), 8 July 1932, UNAG, R2269/5C/34578/2422. At this point, the delegation comprised Destrée, Đaja, Gallavresi, Munch, Rosset, Schellberg, Zimmern, Clarckson-Miller (substitute of Duggan), Dreyfus-Barney, Bonnet, Thelin (substitute of Eastman), de Montenach and Kullmann.

[55] La conférence internationale pour l'enseignement de l'histoire, *Réunion préparatoire des 1er et 2 février 1932* (Paris: PUF, 1933).

[56] Youth Committee, Provisional minutes of the third meeting in Geneva, 13 July 1932, 2, UNAG, R2269/5C/38598/2422.

[57] In the context of textbooks revision, this specialist sub-committee inside the national Committees could work about textbooks to check how textbooks are written and if they respect principle of mutual understanding.

to create a small editorial committee, including Schellberg and competent officials from the Intellectual Cooperation section and the IIIC, to prepare the texts of the resolutions for a future session.

Five days later, Murray summarized the main lines of the delegation's views, which – as noted – had been informed by discussions from the committee of experts on textbook reform. Murray specified that the delegation had adopted the resolution of the textbooks experts' committee by amending them. The delegation was unanimous in emphasizing the essential role of teachers who used textbooks in their teaching.[58] Murray's report introduced some framing lines for the resolutions. While approving the report, the delegation encouraged the publication of Rothbarth's investigation in English. The delegation emphasized the evolution of the Casares Procedure and the importance of studying the psychological effects produced by textbooks on the minds of children (Resolution VI). The delegation accepted the ICIC's request to encourage the writing of manuals in a spirit of international rapprochement. It also recommended the creation of a collection of manuals in use and available to the public. Finally, it asked that the IIIC include a specific editorial section in the *Intellectual Cooperation Bulletin*. A few days later, the ICIC validated these proposals.

In November 1932, Bonnet communicated to the specialists the direction the ICIC had taken following this report. Some elements had been taken into account, others left aside. Strategically, two paths were favoured: seeking collaboration with scientific communities (in particular historians) and encouraging the actions of educators. To make this possible, a specific global organization was envisaged for textbooks, based on the Casares Procedure, a relaunch of the action of the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation in connection with the national centres of educational documentation. Symbolically, the ICO now undertook to try to intervene by indirect means on the content of textbooks.

Conclusion

The ICO's ambition was to become a new international actor for intervening in areas in which governments and private associations were already active. This project required developing an operating functioning recognized as acceptable and legitimate by states, governments and other non-state actors. Initially, the ICIC, IIIC, the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation, expert commissions and sub-committees did not strictly form a coherent and disciplined set of networks.[59] As construed within the League of Nations, intellectual cooperation had multiple dimensions. While not initially at the heart of such endeavours, the field of education offered an opportunity to develop mechanisms for collective endeavours.

Behind the scenes of this new educational mandate, we can observe the gap between the official discourse about the formal organization of intellectual cooperation within the League and the real functioning, which was characterized by obvious struggles for influence. These structuring and consensus-building processes relied on the interplay of actors, negotiations and complex strategies for acknowledgement. Sometimes, the presence of certain actors gave credibility to the others. At other times, the quest for legitimacy made it necessary to push aside potential competitors. While the ICO's institutionalization helped to structure intellectual cooperation, collective work on

[58] Report on the meeting of the Youth Committee's delegation, 12–13 July 1932, 5, UNAG, R2269/5C/38181/2422.

[59] Riondet, "L'Institut international de coopération intellectuelle", 78–80.

educational issues entered a stage of "proceduralization", involving various bodies, expert committees, reports and recommendations. In this context, actors sometimes took positions based on individual, national, corporate or institutional interests, which could generate tensions and misunderstandings. The choice of members and the evolution of the composition of the committees was therefore not a trivial matter. We should question the distribution of work, during this period, in the process of revising textbooks between academic historians and teachers but also between men and women in this context.

The institutionalization of educational issues within the ICO needed several actions: rules and a new modus operandi, based on the creation of a network featuring individual and collective actors already involved. This process was crucial as League action in this realm occurred after the establishment of state educational systems and the development of nation-states, but also reflections about educational issues in various transnational intellectual and educational networks.[60] The ICIC – and even more so the IIIC, which was sometimes perceived as being at the service of French cultural imperialism – had a deficit of legitimacy when working on educational matters.

This chapter has shown how the Sub-Committee of Experts for the Teaching of the Aims and Principles of the League of Nations to Youth – that is, the "Youth Committee" – gradually became a permanent expert committee working on educational issues, even if the shape of this body changed, and even if the role of each contributor shifted over the years.[61] If this instance symbolized the complex rise in educational issues within the organization at a time when another institution, namely the International Bureau of Education was gaining strength, it was necessary for the ICO to produce consensus to be recognized as legitimate.[62] Externalizing expertise with a committee specialized on textbooks revision was a solution, but that meant that certain IIIC and ICIC members had to take control in writing up recommendations after the different meetings.

The early 1930s saw various attempts to form bodies and frameworks for reflecting on issues surrounding youth, education and the League. These arrangements made it possible to produce resolutions and develop institutional positions. However, the ICO's development of an educational mandate – which initially resulted in the reorganization of the national intellectual cooperation commissions and the maintenance of the Casares Resolution – did not produce the expected results. Textbook revision on the basis of the Casares procedure faced various blockages, requiring further reorganization: this included a reconstituted Youth Committee but also a delegation from this body that in 1934 became the Advisory Committee on League of Nations Teaching. Unlike in earlier cases, when the IBE had not been part of the institutional collective, the bureau could officially participate in the Advisory Committee. Its presence was undoubtedly linked to the difficulties encountered by the IIIC and other ICO bodies in coordinating non-governmental actors: in contrast to them, IBE conferences were able to bring different actors to the table.[63] Ultimately, however, one could argue that this table could have only been located in Geneva, at a distance from Paris and the IIIC.

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60 Fuchs, "The Creation of the New International Network in Education"; Siegel, *The Moral Disarmament of France*.

61 Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 206.

62 Rita Hofstetter and ERHISE, *Le Bureau International d'Éducation, matrice de l'internationalisme éducatif (premier 20e siècle)* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2022); Rita Hofstetter and Bernard Schneuwly, *The International Bureau of Education (1925–1968): "The Ascent from the Individual to the Universal"* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2024).

63 International conference of Public Instruction. Émeline Brylinski and Rita Hofstetter, 'Le mode opératoire des conférences internationales de l'instruction publique', in Hofstetter and ERHISE, *Le Bureau International d'Éducation*, 201–40.

The educational, disciplinary and scientific habits of the actors, as well as the ideological and political context of the 1930s, did not allow for an in-depth revision of school textbooks. One of the last actions concerning school textbooks, and more particularly the teaching of history, was symbolic: the draft Declaration Concerning the Teaching of History, which was opened for signature by states in October 1937. This project had a broad scope and was no longer focused on a largely European audience. Responses to this proposal, which called on governments and educational authorities to consider rethinking both history teaching and the rewriting of textbooks, were mixed: approval, agreement in principle, expression of reservations, and sometimes refusal Although school textbooks did not undergo the desired changes during the 1930s, it is not unreasonable to estimate that it was after 1945 that the effects of these collective reflections could be observed (from the evolution of teaching programmes to the co-writing of textbooks). As Pierre Bourdieu reminded us, intellectual life is not spontaneously international and true scientific internationalism cannot be achieved on its own.[64]

[64] Bourdieu, "Les conditions sociales", 3–4.

Part B

Working within the League of Nations System

5

In the Engine Room of Intellectual Cooperation:

A Prosopographical Approach to the Civil Servants of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Paris

Jonathan Voges

In October 1925, the Norwegian zoologist Kristine Bonnevie – a founding member of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) and, besides Marie Skłodowska-Curie, the only woman on this body – wrote a long letter to the newly appointed director of the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC), Julien Luchaire.[1] She seemed surprised that the hiring process of the *chef adjoint* positions had already been completed and asked whether it was "advisable – in [the] interest of the internationality – if in future information would be given, for example through the National Committees[,] when appointments are to be made". Her concern for the strengthening of the IIIC's "internationality" could be read as an echo of well-known and widespread criticisms about the Institute being an allegedly French-dominated venture.[2] To Bonnevie, an extension of the pool of possible candidates by an international announcement of open posts therefore seemed crucial.

However, in addition to this politely worded critique, Bonnevie also used her letter to recommend that one of her own acquaintances become part of the Institute's staff:

> I would have sent you some words just now, even if I had not received your letter, in order to recommend to you a young Norwegian lady, Miss Carlota Torkildsen [sic], who is in Paris and who would be very glad to have some work in the Institute. She is quite a young girl, student, a great linguist and upon the whole an able and clever person.[3]

Bonnevie went on to praise Thorkildsen and encouraged Luchaire to consider hiring her for the next open post. She closed her letter in expressing the hope that the young woman "might come in as the first representative of Norway" as well as offering to the director "my best wishes for your work".[4] Luchaire's reply was short: all the posts were already taken, none were open for new appointments

1 Letter from Kristine Bonnevie to Julian Luchaire, 29 October 1925, UNESCO Archives, Box 3. A.I.17. On Bonnevie, see Ida H. Stamhus and Arve Monsen, "Kristine Bonnevie, Tine Tammes and Elisabeth Schiemann in Early Genetics. Emerging Chances for a University Career for Women", *Journal of the History of Biology* 40, no. 3 (2007): 427–66. For Curie's work in the Committee see Eva Hemmungs Wirtén, *Making Marie Curie: Intellectual Property and Celebrity Culture in an Age of Information* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 2015), 131.

2 For the history of the Institute, see Jean-Jacques Renoliet, L'UNESCO oubliée: *La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne 1999). The critique was especially harsh in Germany; even a rather prudent observer such as Otto Soehring criticized "French influence" as "rampant" within the IIIC: Otto Soehring, *Völkerbund und internationale wissenschaftliche Beziehungen: Vier Rundfunkvorträge gehalten für die "Deutsche Welle"* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer 1927), 25.

3 Letter from Bonnevie to Luchaire, 29 October 1925.

4 Ibid.

and therefore nothing could be done for Bonnevie and Thorkildsen. However, Luchaire noted courteously, "if I could, in the future, I would be very happy to satisfy the wish that you expressed".[5]

Even though the request for Thorkildsen's appointment was unsuccessful, the short exchange is instructive regarding the IIIC's personnel. Being young, academically trained (but not necessarily with extensive scholarly credentials), able to talk and write in different languages (preferably French and English besides the mother tongue), mobile and – ideally – already situated in Paris were very good premises to become part of the IIIC, at least in the lower ranked positions. The advocacy of a member of the ICIC was another element which increased the odds of getting hired, even if Bonnevie's recommendation did not result in such an outcome on this occasion.

Gonzague de Reynold was another founding member of the ICIC.[6] At one level, he used his position – if not mainly, then at least to a high degree – to pursue a right-wing Catholic agenda against what he termed the main dangers of the time: "Jews, Freemasons and Socialists."[7] De Reynold was more successful in placing one of his former students, Blaise Briod, in Paris, whom he used afterwards as a source of information for his own attacks on the Institute. Jean Rudolf von Salis – later a well-known historian but at the time a young academic – thought he might be appointed to the IIIC because of de Reynold's help.[8] He had been in touch with the Swiss professor during his studies and had been privately asked by him to gather information about the German universities when the ICIC ran its first important enquiry into the intellectual situation in the different countries. In the end, this did not happen, and de Salis explained this failure with differences in political questions between him and de Reynold.[9] Nevertheless, de Salis published several articles in Germany explaining what intellectual cooperation under the auspices of the League of Nations was aiming at.[10]

This chapter examines how the IIIC operated as an international bureaucratic institution and, in doing so, takes its readers into the engine room of interwar intellectual cooperation.[11] The international civil servants are used – to adopt the terminology of Antje Dietze and Katja Naumann – as "trojan horses" that enable us to gain a deeper insight into the transnational history of an

5 Letter from Luchaire to Bonnevie, 19 November 1925, UNESCO Archives, Box 3. A.I.17. In the end, Thorkildsen did not get to join the IIIC, but instead worked for another international agency in Paris. After returning to Norway, she married the exiled socialist politician, and later Chancellor of West Germany, Willy Brandt.

6 For his biography see Aram Mattioli, *Zwischen Demokratie und totalitärer Diktatur: Gonzague de Reynold und die Tradition der autoritären Rechten in der Schweiz* (Zürich: Orell Füssli 1994).

7 Gonzague de Reynold, "La reconstruction intellectuelle, les catholiques et la Société des Nations", *La Revue Générale*, June/July 1922, 617–33. On de Reynold's right-wing networks in the ICIC, see Jonathan Voges, "Antiliberal Internationalists in the League of Nations? Gonzague de Reynold, Alfredo Rocco, and Hugo Andres Krüss in the International Committee of Intellectual Cooperation", in *Antiliberal Internationalism in the Twentieth Century: Beyond Left and Right*, ed. Matthijs Lok, Marjet Broslma, Robin de Bruin, Stefan Couperus and Rachel McElroy White (New York: Routledge, 2025), 111–26.

8 On his trajectory from de Reynold's student to serving as the deputy director of the IIIC's section for literature, see Jean Rudolf de Salis, *Grenzüberschreitungen: Ein Lebensbericht. Erster Teil: 1901–1939* (Zürich: Orell Füssli 1978), 220.

9 On the enquiry in general, see Denys P. Myers, *Nine Years of the League of Nations, 1920–28 (Ninth Yearbook)* (Boston: World Peace Foundation Pamphlets 1929), 113. For de Reynold's role concerning the information about the German universities see De Salis, *Grenzüberschreitungen*, 239.

10 See, for example, Hans Rudolf Salis, "Der Völkerbund und die internationale geistige Zusammenarbeit. II. Tendenzen des internationalen Kulturlebens und das Institut für geistige Zusammenarbeit", *Völkerbundfragen* 3, no. 3 (1926): 209–13; "Die internationale geistige Zusammenarbeit beim Völkerbund", *Völkerbundfragen* 4, no. 4 (1927): 215–20.

11 Klaas Dykmann has undertaken something similar for the officials of the League of Nations Secretariat: Klaas Dykmann, "How International Was the Secretariat of the League of Nations?", *The International History Review* 37, no. 4 (2015): 721–44.

international organization.[12] Transnational actors, of which officials at the IIIC were an example, acted in "different social arenas and networks", national and international, and moved "on different spatial scales".[13] The chapter first provides a closer look at German IIIC staff – as Germany was a special case because of the late admission to the League of Nations.[14] It then presents a prolegomenon for a prosopography of the Institute's personal.

The German case: "a young scientist with administrative competences"

As a losing power in the First World War, Germany was not admitted to become a member of the League of Nations until 1926[15] – with fatal consequences regarding the image of the international organization in German public opinion.[16] Nevertheless, some Germans worked for League-related bodies from the outset, leading certain experts in international law to speak of a "de-facto membership" that preceded de jure membership.[17] Within the realm of intellectual cooperation, the most prominent example was Albert Einstein's complicated collaboration with the ICIC in the early 1920s.[18]

Similar discussions – even if they did not involve individuals with the Nobel Laureate's renown – took place when the question of a German civil servant at the IIIC in Paris arose – again before Germany's admission to the League of Nations (but in the slipstream of the admission process). The appointee in question was the social scientist Gerhard von Schulze Gaevernitz.[19] Neither German academia nor the German foreign office were happy with the chosen candidate.[20] However, Schulze Gaevernitz was particularly well-respected in Great Britain and was in contact with Gilbert Murray, another member of the ICIC.[21] At the time of his calling, he was already an elderly liberal professor at the height of his career.

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12 Antje Dietze and Katja Naumann, "Revisiting Transnational Actors from a Spatial Perspective", *The International History Review* 25, no. 3–4 (2018): 415–30, 416. See also Pierre-Yves Saunier, *Transnational History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013), 35–7.

13 Dietze and Naumann, "Revisiting Transnational Actors", 418.

14 For the German relationship with the League of Nations before the admission, see Joachim Wintzer, *Deutschland und der Völkerbund:* 1918–1926 (Paderborn: Schöningh 2006).

15 On the diplomatic background regarding German non-admission to the League of Nations, see Christoph M. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1977), 23–48.

16 See, for example, Carl Hanns Pollog, "Wahrer Völkerbund und Schein-Völkerbund", *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* 2, no. 7 (1925): 465–73.

17 Herbert Kraus, "Zur Frage des Eintritts Deutschlands in den Völkerbund", *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* 78, no. 2 (1925): 173–230, 178.

18 Einstein was under the close scrutiny of the German Foreign Office and most of his colleagues were furious that he took part in the international organization while they were banned from international congresses because of the so-called "boycott of German science" after the First World War. On Einstein's file at the ministry, see Siegfried Grundmann, *Einsteins Akte: Wissenschaft und Politik – Einsteins Berliner Jahre* (Wiesbaden: Springer 2004); on the boycott, see Brigitte Schroeder-Gudehus, "Deutsche Wissenschaft und internationale Zusammenarbeit, 1914–1928: Ein Beitrag zum Studium kultureller Beziehungen in politischen Krisenzeiten" (PhD thesis, Geneva, 1966).

19 Kurt Zielinger, *Gerhart von Schulze Gaevernitz: Eine Darstellung seines Wirkens und seiner Werke. Nebst Porträt* (Berlin: Prager 1926).

20 For the German foreign office, the main problem was that it was Einstein who had suggested Schulze-Gaevernitz. See Deutsches Konsulat Amtsbezirk: Kantone Genf, Neuenburg, Waadt, Allis to Auswärtiges Amt, 28 July 1925, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Das Internationale Institut für geistige Zusammenarbeit in Paris, R 65506.

21 Schulze Gaevernitz published broadly about the United Kingdom. See for example Gustav von Schulze-Gaevernitz, "Die geistigen Grundlagen der angelsächsischen Weltherrschaft", *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik* 56 (1926): 26–64.

Luckily for later historians, Schulze Gaevernitz kept a life chronicle ["*Lebenschronik*"], albeit with only short entries. In 1925, he wrote about his work for the Institute as a deputy head, that is, one of the positions directly under the director Luchaire, that at the IIIC, he had "mainly received people, initiated international contacts, especially between Germany and France" and "could be of use to some people". For the first time, Schulze Gaevernitz went on, "I got into touch with France, which became more important for post-war Germany than England with its grandfatherly attitude [*altväterliche Natur*]."[22] On the one hand, Schulze Gaevernitz was presented as a "forebearer of German democracy" and an ardent proponent of "intellectual reconciliation" with the former war enemies.[23] On the other hand, even Schulze Gaevernitz interpreted his appointment, to a considerable degree, in terms of the possibilities that such a position might offer for his homeland, rather than for the international community.[24] Nonetheless he closed: "I quitted in late autumn, because it got in the way of my scientific and pedagogical life goal".[25] Schulze Gaevernitz obviously thought the position in Paris was some kind of representative part-time job, but that was not what was expected of him. Once he realised the work implications, he returned to Germany – even though he deemed his nomination as the "coronation" of his life's work" and an "acknowledgement of the global rank of German science".[26]

After Schulze Gaevernitz's resignation, the search for a German candidate began anew. Luchaire asked the German foreign office for advice on whom to appoint, with the individual in question being "either a civil servant with good connections to academic circles or – and that would be preferable in the German interest – a young scholar with administrative competences".[27] The German diplomatic memo identified another problem: "The conditions are rather unfavourable (50,000 French Francs per annum). It will be necessary for the German side to add something to this income to get a capable person."[28] And in another conversation with the German embassy, Luchaire stated as clearly as possible what he expected from the new employee, indicating that he "was not interested in again recruiting a scholar of the first rank" as "experience has shown that what the Institute gains in splendour from well-known staff members, it pays for dearly by the reduction in actual collaboration".[29]

This case study is important for several reasons. First, the more highly ranked positions in Paris were political posts; foreign offices were therefore included in the process of choosing the "right" candidate. Werner Picht (who would become Schulze Gaevernitz's successor) did not apply directly to the IIIC, but to the German foreign office which afterwards "recommended" him to Paris. Second, it should be noted that Paris was an expensive city to live in. The salary even of the leading

22 Schulze Gaevernitz, entry in his life chronicle, 11 May to 25 July 1926, in Nachlass Schulze Gaevernitz. Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit. Archiv des Liberalismus.

23 D. Rammert, "Schulze Gaevernitz", *Berliner Redaktion*, 5 March 1926.

24 This is another example of the "ideologically and intellectually interconnected pasts of nationalism, imperialism and internationalisms". Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, "Rethinking the History of Internationalism", in *Internationalisms: A Twentieth Century History*, ed. Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2017), 3–14, 5.

25 Schulze Gaevernitz, life chronicle, 11 May to 25 July 1926.

26 Rammert, "Schulze Gaevernitz".

27 Soehring to von Rheinbaben, 17 September 1926, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes Das Internationale Institut für geistige Zusammenarbeit in Paris, R 65508.

28 Ibid.

29 Rieth, Memo 26 November 1926, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Das Internationale Institut für geistige Zusammenarbeit in Paris, R 65509.

bureaucrats was meagre compared to what was required to lead the lifestyle that was expected of them. Therefore, more money was needed and instead of giving it directly to the IIIC, states chose to make the Institute hire a person that they would then take on their payroll (sometimes only partially). The final point of note is the job description itself. In Luchaire's view, the IIIC was not designed as representative organ where elderly scientists and renowned intellectuals could use their prominence to foster international cooperation (which was what Schule Gaevernitz had expected to do in Paris and could be regarded as one of the tasks of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation),[30] but as a working bureaucracy that would get the engine of international intellectual cooperation running – and keep it moving.[31] Therefore, experts in the management of scientific and cultural matters were needed and found. Although the IIIC was accommodated in the highly representative Palais-Royal, the Institute itself was designed as a working institution, or to phrase it metaphorically, the engine room for the cruise ship called "intellectual cooperation" – while Bergson, Murray, Einstein, Curie and the other ICIC members on the Geneva sundeck made their plans and discussed the programmes for the work to be done by the people down below.[32]

This conception of the IIIC's nature led to a specific staffing policy. In the German case, Werner Picht – a young expert for adult education with some past research experience in Britain – was hired to administer the international relations of universities and scientific organizations.[33] Besides his scientific record, the reason for this choice was his association with the so-called "George Circle", a group that gravitated around the poet Stefan George.[34] In this environment, he had met the Prussian Minister for Education, Carl Heinrich Becker, one of the most influential figures when it came to cultural and scientific questions in the Weimar Republic.[35]

Later, a second German deputy head, Margarete Rothbarth, a gifted and administratively-experienced young historian, was appointed to the IIIC.[36] She was paid by the German Academic for Politics (Deutsche Hochschule für Politik, DHP), which had in turn received the funds for this from the German foreign office.[37] As also noted in Xavier Riondet's contribution to this volume,

30 Again, Einstein's case is interesting as the League of Nations was keen to use his status as an international "celebrity" for its own purposes. On this form of "celebrity diplomacy" *avant la lettre*, see Jonathan Voges, "Wissenschaftler als Diplomaten: Der Völkerbund und die internationale geistige Zusammenarbeit in den 1920er Jahren", *Acta Historica Leopoldina* 73 (2021), 121–38. On "celebrity diplomacy" in general, see Mark Wheeler, "Celebrity Diplomacy", in *The SAGE Handbook of Diplomacy*, ed. Costas M. Constantinou, Pauline Kerr and Paul Sharp (Los Angeles/London, SAGE 2016), 530–9.

31 For the history of the political metaphor of the "machine", see Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, *Der Staat als Maschine: Zur politischen Metaphorik des absoluten Fürstenstaats* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1986).

32 See also Martin Grandjean, "The Paris/Geneva Divide. A Network Analysis of the Archives of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations", in *Culture as Soft Power: Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy*, ed. Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Diana Roig-Sanz (Berlin: De Gruyter 2022), 65–98.

33 Luchaire described Picht in his memoirs as being "dedicated to the life of the mind" ("vie de l'esprit") and "a singular melange of a passionate patriot and liberal". Julien Luchaire, *Confessions d'un Français moyen*, II: 1914–1950 (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1978), 113.

34 See, for example, Ulrich Raulff, *Kreis ohne Meister: Stefan Georges Nachleben* (Munich: DTV, 2012).

35 Guido Müller, W*eltpolitische Bildung und akademische Reform: Carl Heinrich Beckers Wissenschafts- und Hochschulpolitik 1908–1930* (Cologne: Böhlau 1991).

36 For her biography, see Ute Lemke, "'La femme, la clandestine de l'histoire': Margarete Rothbarth – ein Engagement für den Völkerbund", *Lendemains* 37, no. 9 (2012): 45–59.

37 On the DHP, see Manfred Gangl, "Die Gründung der 'Deutschen Hochschule für Politik'", in *Das Politische. Zur Entstehung der Politikwissenschaft während der Weimarer Republik*, ed. by Hauke Brunkhorst (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2008), 77–96. For the special arrangement of Rothbarth's post at the IIIC, see Soehring to von Rheinbaben, 17 September 1926. In: Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes Das Internationale Institut für geistige Zusammenarbeit in Paris R 65508.

Rothbarth was engaged in efforts for the revision of school textbooks. Moreover, besides her longstanding affiliation to pro-League organizations in Germany, she was part of the second very influential German intellectual and academic grouping of that time, the Naumann Circle, which kept on working even after its central figure, the liberal thinker Friedrich Naumann, died in 1919.[38] Therefore, both German leading intellectual circles had their delegates in Paris in the middle of the 1920s. This aspect demonstrates quite clearly the importance of national networks at the IIIC – and in a broader sense, it highlights the importance of researching the different "spatial scales" transnational actors moved on.[39] In this case, these included the national (the German intellectual circles), the transnational (the DHP) and the international (the Institute in Paris).

Whether this was the case for other nations as well is a question that merits further investigation, using sources from the relevant national archives. As indicated above, with regard to the case of Switzerland, it certainly seems to have been the case that membership of de Reynold's personal network could help in finding a place at the IIIC.

Who worked for the Institute – and why?

The remaining sections of this chapter dig deeper into what one might call the prosopography of IIIC members.[40] While these comments will be fairly brief, they reveal much about the structure of the workforce of an organization that was on the one hand inherently international – and therefore sought to attract employees from as many countries and regions as possible – and, on the other hand, situated in a concrete place, Paris, and tied to national policies. In the latter regard, the German case was just one example, the even more obvious one being the French.[41]

Who became employed, where did they come from and what was their background? The employees' personnel files shed light on these questions. The existing holdings at the UNESCO Archives in Paris are not complete, although over 130 files have survived. Most of them include a short questionnaire in the beginning, containing relevant information for those interested in the social history of the staff in Paris.[42] To start with an aspect that is hardly surprising: the great majority (more than fifty per cent) of the IIIC employees were French. Having French nationality was so common at the Institute that in many cases, it was not even documented in the files while all other nationalities were kept tidily in files. Especially in the lower-ranked positions, nearly everyone – with a few significant exceptions that are noted later – were French citizens (in most instances, they already lived in Paris before applying). There were several reasons for this. The French government

38 Ursula Krey, "Demokratie durch Opposition: Der Naumann-Kreis und die Intellektuellen", in *Kritik und Mandat. Intellektuelle in der deutschen Politik*, ed. Gangolf Hübinger and Thomas Hertfelder (Stuttgart: DVA, 2000), 71–92; Frederick Bacher, *Friedrich Naumann und sein Kreis* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner 2017).

39 Dietze and Naumann, "Revisiting Transnational Actors", 416.

40 For the methodology, see for example Giovanni Levi, "Les usages de la biographie", *Annales* 44, no. 6 (1989): 1325–36. For other prosopographic attempts to analyse the League of Nations and especially its Intellectual Cooperation section see Diana Roig-Sanz and Rubén Rodríguez-Casañ's contribution in this volume, and Christiane Sibille, "LONSEA: Der Völkerbund in neuer Sicht. Eine Netzwerkanalyse zur Geschichte internationaler Organisationen", *Zeithistorische Forschungen* 8, no. 3 (2011): 475–83; Martin Grandjean, "A Representative Organization? Ibero-American Networks in the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1939)", in *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-America*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Jaume Subirana (New York: Routledge 2020), 65–89.

41 See also Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La cooperation intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique Internationale*, no. 52 (2011): 51–67.

42 The files have now been digitized. UNESCO Archives, International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation. A.IV.28, 1–131.

paid an allowance for most of the staff and was keen to see French people employed.[43] Moreover, the average salary – especially for shorthand typists and writing staff – was so low that one could not afford to move to Paris just for that job. Third, in most cases the employment was only short term, maybe for a year, sometimes even only for one or two months.[44] A fourth reason are language skills. As Elisabet Carbó-Catalan's chapter in this volume shows, translation was a key feature of the League's work for intellectual cooperation.[45] French was a prerequisite to be part of the translational machine, and it was the lingua franca within the engine room of intellectual cooperation.

But even with the high rate of French employees in the lower ranks, there were some interesting exceptions. Quite a lot of women of Russian origin worked for the IIIC.[46] This may be surprising at first glance, considering the fact that Soviet Union was not a member of the League of Nations – a complex relationship that is further discussed in Anastassiya Schacht's contribution to the present book. One reason for the presence of Russian staff members is the fact that Paris was one of the main centres of Russian emigration after the Bolsheviks took power.[47] The Russians who came to work at the IIIC were descendants of bourgeois Russian intellectuals who had fled their homeland after the revolution and now had to work wherever they could find employment to make ends meet in the new circumstances.[48] Most of them had lived and studied in Western Europe before 1914, were familiar with at least two Western European languages (French and German, often English as well) and had acquired typing competences in Paris.[49]

The picture is different if one focuses on the higher-ranked officials – the heads and deputy heads of the different sections. As noted, these posts were regarded as highly political and therefore national states were granted the opportunity to name candidates. Some of them were also regarded as contact persons for the national state they came from, as was the case with Margarete Rothbarth for Germany or Bogomir Dalma for Yugoslavia.[50]

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43 See, for example, the article by the Luchaire's successor as IIIC director, Henri Bonnet, who talked quite frankly about the problems the French influence had on financing his institution. Henri Bonnet, "'The Finances of the League", *International Affairs* 14, no. 1 (1935): 151.

44 Stenographers in particular were only hired on a monthly basis – see, for example, the case of Mademoiselle Deniel. Madame Delannoy was the director's secretary for one year (1928–29). The head of the stenographers' section, Darby, stayed only for two years (1927–29).

45 See also Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "Language and Translation Policies in the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (1922–1946): Promoting the Internationalization of the Intellectual Field" (PhD thesis, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya and KU Leuven, 2024).

46 See, for example, Tatiana Doukine-Chestov, a literary scholar who was born in 1897 and worked for the Institute from 1925–1930 or Pauline Feldstein who worked for the Institute from 1925 to 1940. See also Laqua, "Internationlism ou affirmation de la nation?", 65.

47 See, for example, Karl Schlögel, *Der große Exodus: Die russische Emigration und ihre Zentren 1917 bis 1941* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1994); Marc Raeff, A *Cultural History of the Russian Emigration, 1919–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1990). On the Soviet–League relationship prior to the admission of the Soviet Union, see Kathryn Wassermann Davis, *The Soviet Union and the League of Nations*, 1919–1933 (Geneva: Geneva Research Center, 1934).

48 See Karl Schlögel, *Das sowjetische Jahrhundert: Archäologie einer untergegangenen Welt* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2018), 87. It was exactly this milieu of exiled Russians the Committee analysed in its "enquête". Gonzague de Reynold, *Enquête sur la situation du travail intellectuel. Deuxième Série: La vie intellectuelle dans les divers Pays. Russie: Les Groupes académiques russes. Rapport sur la situation et l'organisation des intellectuelles Russes hors de Russie* (Geneva: Société des Nations, 1923).

49 Olga Berekovitch (listed as "russe-polonaise" in the files) had studied in France and in Great Britain; Pauline Feldstein had worked for other institutes and private persons in Paris before being hired by the Institute and was able to read and write French, Russian, English and had basic knowledge of Italian.

50 He was listed as "service nationale yougoslave".

Another significance is that even the majority of the French lower-ranked civil servants at the IIIC had a rather international biography, a "biographie croisée", before they applied to become part of the Institute.[51] For instance, some of them had written protocols for international conferences or had worked for the Japanese delegation at the International Labour Office. Working for the Institute was just another step in a highly international working biography, or another part of their "global CV".[52]

Another interesting finding – which is comparable to what the German example suggests – is that the Institute's staff was rather young: most of the employees (around 80 per cent) were born in the time one might call the "long turn of the century", between 1895 and 1905. That means that most of them had finished their studies just a few years earlier and gained initial professional experiences before entering employment at the Institute in Paris. Thus, a mobile class of now mature, internationally minded civil servants gathered at the IIIC – a pool of people that after 1945 became valuable for the UN and UNESCO.[53]

There were, however, a few cases of senior scholars who found their way to Paris. The earlier part of this chapter mentioned the example of Schulze Gaevernitz, who did not stay long at the Institute. Jean Efremoff (Jan Efremov) is another such case. Having been born in Russia in 1866, he was nearly 60 years old when the IIIC recruited him as an editor for its publications. As with other Russians at the IIIC, Effremoff was an émigré, and in this case a prominent one: he was a writer and expert in international law, and he had been an elected member of the Russian parliament, the Duma, before 1914.[54]

Finally, it is worth considering the duration of time the employees stayed at the IIIC. As noted earlier, because of the Institute's rigid financial situation, it was never the most generous employer in financial terms, but the salaries were not only low but also precarious.[55] Especially for lower-ranked employees, a policy of "hire and fire" seemed to be the rule: staff were appointed for special occasions, such as conferences, and afterwards they had to wait for the next opportunity to get a short-term job. Illnesses were reasons for not getting an extension of the work contract.[56] Others independently decided to leave the IIIC after one or two years. Most of them found better positions in their home country, for example as a university professor.[57] The time in Paris for them was one part of an attractive résumé to become "employable" (to use a modern word) at home. Others stayed at the IIIC for a long time, many from the middle of the 1920s until the end of the 1930s or the beginning of the 1940s.[58]

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51 For the term, see Johannes Großmann, *Die Internationale der Konservativen: Transnationale Elitenzirkel und private Außenpolitik in Westeuropa seit 1945* (München: De Gruyter, 2014), 28.

52 Bernd Hausberger, "Globalgeschichte als Lebensgeschichte(n)", in *Globale Lebensläufe: Menschen als Akteure im weltgeschichtlichen Geschehen*, ed. Bernd Hausberger (Vienna: Mandelbaum, 2006), 9–27.

53 For example, Olav Grunt (born in 1904) and Barrin, who took care of the liquidation of the Institute.

54 On his biography and affiliation to the IIIC, see Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation?", 64.

55 In his memoirs, de Reynold talks a lot about the difficult living and working conditions of "ces fonctionnaires mal payés" of the Institute. Gonzague de Reynold, *Mes mémoires*, vol. 3 (Geneva: Éditions Générales, 1963), 474.

56 For example, the stenographer Hilde Finkelnburg from Germany.

57 For example, the Polish author and literary scholar Wladislaw Folkierski who became a professor in Warszawa after working for the IIICI from 1927 to 1928.

58 Charles Henry (French) from 1926 to 1946, Marie Girard (French) and Euripide Foundoukidis (Greek) from 1929 to 1941, and the aforementioned Pauline Feldstein from 1925 to 1941 are just a few examples of long-serving employees at the Institute.

An international *esprit de corps*

Based on these findings, one can draw several conclusions about the staff and staffing of the IIIC. First, even a highly bureaucratic institution with allegedly strict rules concerning the recruitment process was not free of nepotism is just one noteworthy, if unsurprising, finding. There were various cases of ICIC members trying to install "their" candidates in Paris. For example, the Austrian historian Alfons Dopsch (whose involvement is further explored in Johannes Feichtinger's chapter) managed to get his niece an internship at the IIIC.[59] More interesting are the questions that Klaas Dykmann poses for the League Secretariat in Geneva, particularly when applied to the Parisian Institute. He defines an international secretariat as "a secretariat composed of officials coming from many different nations and staff showing a dedication to the international goals of the organization and intercultural dialogue as such".[60] Dykmann's conclusion is that the League Secretariat was not really international because of its European (or more precisely English and French) predominance.[61]

The same could be said about the IIIC, with an even stronger domination of French civil servants. Maybe owing to the fact that French employees did not have to move to get a post at the Paris-based Institute or because of the general reluctance of the British policy to emphasize the role of intellectual cooperation in the League of Nations. Even people who did not come from France (or Britain) and worked at the Institute had studied in at least one of the countries or already lived in Paris (or, in the case of married women, they had been born French but had changed their nationality after their marriage).[62]

Beside all hardships – the meagre payment and precarious employment status – the staff the IIIC attracted a highly trained, young, internationally minded and at least partly internationally composed young group of professionals who facilitated international intellectual cooperation.[63] The autobiographical sketches that provide inside views about the IIIC's membership even hint at some kind of international "esprit de corps" which developed over the years. In the engine room of international intellectual cooperation, a crowd of skilled mechanics could be found who developed under difficult circumstances an administration that kept in touch with researchers and intellectuals all over the world, became increasingly professional in organizing international congresses and conferences, and kept the machine running. In their day-to-day job, they may have been of greater importance for maintaining the steamship of intellectual cooperation than the ICIC captains in Geneva.

59 Birgit Ficker was in Paris for one year in the early 1930s.

60 Dykmann, "How International", 723.

61 Ibid., 734.

62 Yvonne Collin was born Norwegian and French by marriage.

63 In his memoirs, Gonzague des Reynold describes heart-warming scenes of gatherings of the idealistic young academics – "de l'un et de l'autre sexe" – in the small apartments the IIIC employees were able to afford. De Reynold, *Mes mémoires*, 475.

6

A Gender Perspective on the History of Intellectual Cooperation:

Women at the League of Nations and the Paris Institute

Diana Roig-Sanz and Rubén Rodríguez-Casañ

Narrating the global past does not mean the pursuit of encyclopaedic objectives, nor does it represent an accumulation of national histories. Instead, the field of global history is concerned with interactions, processes of exchange and cultural differences in various locations, but also over time.[1] As Christophe Charle has noted, "the global and the national approaches are neither radically incompatible universes, nor Russian dolls which nest simply and harmoniously one within the other".[2] Instead, global history has shown a growing interest in a diversity of themes connecting multiple scales, a wide range of disciplines and their historiographies, and various historical agents promoting challenging methodological debates about how a history of economic, social, political and cultural processes can be written in global terms.

The research for this chapter is conceptually situated within this inclusive, unbounded and pluralistic framework, and it is conscious of the urgent need to further decolonize history-writing and fight against patriarchy. This perspective will allow us to push forward debates on a) the extent to which we need to reassess both Anglo-American and French assumed dominance in the history of intellectual cooperation and b) the fact that global history needs to include a gender (and very likely feminist) perspective to be able to fully decolonize its approaches and methodologies.[3] This dual focus on the limitations of global history as a field of study, and a more conscious inclusion of women in the history of international organizations, is at the core of this chapter.

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1 Literature in this field has grown significantly in the last twenty years, but it is worth acknowledging influential earlier works: Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997); Matthias Middell and Katja Naumann, "Global History and the Spatial Turn: From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalization", *Journal of Global History* 5, no. 1 (2010): 149–70; Maxime Berg, ed., *Writing the History of the Global: Challenges for the 21st Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

2 Christophe Charle, "Histoire globale, histoire nationale? Comment réconcilier recherche et pédagogie", *Le Débat* 3, no. 175 (2013): 60–8.

3 See, among others, Su Lin Lewis, "Decolonising the History of Internationalism: Transnational Activism across the South", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 2 (2024): 345–69; Richard Drayton and David Motadel, "Discussion: The Futures of Global History", *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018): 1–21; Neus Rotger, Diana Roig-Sanz and Marta Puxán, eds, "Historicizing the Global: An Interdisciplinary Perspective", special issue of the *Journal of Global History* 14, no. 3 (2019).

The existing literature on cultural international organizations has highlighted their historical development.[4] There is also work on the role of major figures or cultural mediators in relevant centres of cultural production (Paris, London, New York).[5] By contrast, the role of the so-called "peripheries" and the Global South in intellectual cooperation has not been sufficiently addressed. Indeed, there is a stark contrast between their role in the history of international thought and their absence in many intellectual histories. Despite a number of articles on the peripheries, its plural meanings, non-state capitals, and apparently secondary actors in cultural relations, intellectual cooperation and cultural diplomacy – among them many women – remains underexplored. Moreover, some of the literature on international organizations has paradoxically been grounded in the perspective of the nation-state, leaving aside agents and agencies that may fall outside this framework, such as stateless nations or peripheral actors that have been often seen as recipients or targets. That said, a growing literature explores the entwined relationship between cultural diplomacy, international organization and intellectual cooperation from vantage points that are outside of Western Europe and the United States.[6]

This chapter understands the spaces of international relations as epistemological boundaries where knowledge is built and everyone should be included and recognized. This means to restore the work made by women and acknowledge that they played a role in their own right, instead of only describing their lives or looking for them as if they were a needle in a haystack. As Linda K. Kerber has claimed, "when women are absent from the narrative history of ideas, it is not because they are truly absent, but because the historian did not seek energetically enough to find them".[7] The present chapter cannot offer a systematic literature review on the relationship between women and public diplomacy.[8] Recent research has confirmed that many women played a key role in international

[4] Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order*; and Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique Internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 51–67; Daniel Laqua, Wouter Van Acker and Christophe Verbruggen, eds, *International Organizations and Global Civil Society: Histories of the Union of International Organizations and Associations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

[5] Diana Roig-Sanz and Reine Meylaerts, *Literary Translation and Cultural Mediators in "Peripheral" Cultures: Customs Officers or Smugglers?* (London: Palgrave 2018).

[6] Corinne Pernet, "La cultura como política: los intercambios culturales entre Europa y América Latina en los años de entreguerras", *Puente@Europa* 5, no. 3–4 (2007): 66–73; Juliette Dumont, *L'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle et le Brésil (1924–1946): Le pari de la diplomatie culturelle* (Paris: IHEAL, 2008), and *Diplomatie culturelle et fabrique des identités: Argentine, Brésil, Chili (1919–1946)* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2018); Fabián Herrera León, "México y el Instituto Internacional de Cooperación Intelectual 1926–1939", *Tzintzun* 49 (2009): 169–200; Martin Grandjean, "A Representative Organization? Ibero-American Networks in the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1939)", in *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-America*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Jaume Subirana (London: Routledge, 2020), 65–89; Diana Roig-Sanz, "Dues fites en la col·laboració catalana a l'IICI, la UNESCO i el PEN Club Internacional (1927 i 1959)", in *Lectures dels anys cinquanta*, ed. J. F. Ruiz-Casanova and Enric Gallén (Lleida: Punctum, 2013), 155–89; Alexandra Pita González, "América (Latina) en París: Mistral, Reyes y Torres Bodet en la Colección Iberoamericana, 1927–1940", in *América Latina y el internacionalismo ginebrino de entreguerras*, ed. Y. Wehrli and F. Herrera León (Mexico City: Dirección General del Acervo Histórico Diplomático, 2019), 241–76; Laura Fólica and Ventsislav Ikoff, "Between the Local and the International: Enrique Gómez Carrillo and Antonio Aita at the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation", in Roig-Sanz and Subirana, *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators*, 247–71; Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "Foreign Catalan Projection, An Overview of the Catalan Case", *Comparative Literature Studies* 59, no. 4 (2022): 836–54. For a thematic approach, see Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, "Language and Translation Policies in the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (1922–1946): The Internationalization of the Intellectual Field in the Making" (PhD thesis, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya and KU Leuven, 2024).

[7] Linda K. Kerber, *Toward an Intellectual History of Women: Essays* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 19.

[8] Katie Hickman, *Daughters of Britannia: The Lives and Times of Diplomatic Wives* (New York: William Morrow, 1999); Benedetta Craveri, *Amanti e regine: ll potere delle donne* (Milan: Adelphi Edizione, 2005); Andrée Dore-Audiber, *Propos irrévérencieux d'une épouse d'ambassadeur* (Paris: Karthala, 2002); and Huguette Pérol, Femme d'ambassedeur (Paris: Guibert, 2002). For further details, see the references in Paula Bruno, "Women and Diplomatic Life", in *Culture as Soft Power*, ed. Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Diana Roig-Sanz (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 43–64.

organizations and developed pioneering positions that had lasting effects.[9] These works also remind us of how the study of women and diplomatic circles is at the intersection of several fields. However, much remains to be done regarding the inclusion of gender politics: existing work is often written from the perspective of a history of women in diplomacy, or built around the analysis of individual case studies (of which the present book contains one example, namely a discussion of Gabrielle Radziwill). A genuine gender perspective needs further development.

This is particularly true for the case of the League of Nations and its International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) and, more generally, for those women working as diplomats in the first half of the twentieth century. Notably, the history of women in the diplomatic world emerges from a genealogy in which we might trace the women of courts, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, but also the salonières in pre-revolutionary France. In the twentieth century, new roles for women in the public sphere appeared. For instance, so-called "diplomatic ladies" hosted events at the intersection of the public and private spheres, but also performed other roles with greater ambition and a higher level of professionalization. They interacted with a wide range of public officials.[10] In the most recent literature, different terms have been used to describe these women, either as actors of "non-state cultural diplomacy" or as "unofficial ambassadors". However, as we shall see, none of these terms correspond to the roles undertaken by the group of women at the League of Nations or at the IIIC.

This chapter proposes an interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological framework at the crossroads of gender politics, global literary studies and international cultural relations. Our research promotes the study of networks and connectivity in relation to gender and cultural exchange. We aim to quantitatively examine the flows of knowledge, people, roles and institutions associated with international organizations, and we encourage the emphasis on the relational, rather than on isolated fixed categories, to reassess cultural contact and shed light into unknown aspects of the past. In this respect, we will briefly examine some women who played a key role in the international networks around the League of Nations, the IIIC and the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation as a way to make visible their work and international exposure.

Gender politics at the League of Nations: job positions, age and nationality

This section primarily draws on the data and records compiled by the League of Nations Search Engine (LONSEA) regarding the organization of events and activities that took place between 1919 and 1946.[11] As with any database, our methodology inevitably carries certain biases. Each

[9] Jean-Marc Delaunay and Yves Denéchère, *Femmes et relations internationales au XXe siècle* (Paris: Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne, 2007); Joyce Goodman, "Women and International Intellectual Co-operation", *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 3 (2012): 357–68; Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James, eds, *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500* (London: Routledge, 2016); Paula Bruno, Alexandra Pita and Marina Álvaro, eds, *Embajadoras culturales: Mujeres latinoamericanas y vida diplomática*, 1860–1960 (Rosario: Prohistoria, 2021); Sylvia Dummer Scheel, Charlotte Faucher and Camila Gatica Mizala, *Soft Power Beyond the Nation* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2024). See also Helen McCarthy, *Women of The World: The Rise of the Female Diplomat* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).

[10] Jennifer Mori, *The Culture of Diplomacy: Britain in Europe, c. 1750–1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011).

[11] This is a project of the University of Heidelberg, now maintained by the University of Basel, that showcases the historical development of international organizations and global governance at the first half of the twentieth century. See Madeleine Herren et al., LONSEA – *League of Nations Search Engine* (Heidelberg/Basel, 2017), available at http://www.lonsea.org (last accessed 20 February 2025).

dataset offers a portion of the historical narrative, making it essential to briefly outline the steps followed in constructing each of the databases we have used. LONSEA was developed from sources documenting the network of international organizations affiliated with the League of Nations and the individuals involved in them.[12] The database draws on information from the League's personnel files and questionnaires sent to its satellite organizations, compiled in the *Handbook of International Organisations*.[13] As noted, this data collection method introduces certain biases, as participation not recorded in official registers is excluded. As we will demonstrate, alternative strategies, such as extracting names from exchanged letters, brings to light notable figures. That being said, the database contains 12,359 records offering valuable information regarding the individuals involved in one of the 1,071 organizations connected to the League of Nations. The records of each member allow us to illuminate actors and cultural mediators that are little known or have been almost entirely forgotten. Specifically, we have data on their gender, date of birth, nationality and on the role they played in the various organizations and events in which they participated. This wealth of information makes it possible to study the internal dynamics of international diplomacy, and to understand to what extent gender or background were important factors in the working dynamics of the League of Nations.

More specifically, the present section examines gender as a substantial factor for the League of Nations in relation to three important elements: the nationality and diverse geopolitical origins, the age at the time of admission as a League employee and their job positions. To this end, we have firstly enriched the LONSEA database and filled the gaps where gender was not mentioned. Specifically, 24.1% of the records (2,982 records) did not define gender. Therefore, the Genderize.io model has been applied under the criteria of probability >= 0.9 and count >= 10 to enrich the missing data in the LONSEA database. In this respect, the Genderize.io model predicts gender based on the first name. This has made it possible to reduce the number of people with no identified gender from 24.1% to 16.6%. Of course, it is already well-known that the accuracy of this model can fluctuate depending on the origin of the first name, and this is a challenge and could be a potential bias.[14] However, we have confirmed that on the sample of people with the gender information already recorded by LONSEA, the accuracy under the same criteria is 99%. Thus, the gender distribution of the 12,359 records is as follows:

- **Male** 7,739 (62.6 %)
- **Unknown** 2,048 (16.6 %)
- **Female** 2,572 (20.8 %)

[12] For more information on the curated and clean dataset used for this research, see Rubén Rodríguez-Casañ, Alessio Cardillo, Diana Roig-Sanz and Javier Borge-Holthoefer, 2025, "Actors and Organizations in the League of Nations Era (1920–1946)", *CORA: Repositori de Dades de Recerca* (2024), available at https://doi.org/10.34810/data2182 (last accessed 10 May 2025).

[13] The organizations related to the League are those registered at the *Handbook of International Organizations*, which was edited by the League of Nations in eight volumes between 1921 and 1939.

[14] Fariba Karimi, Claudia Wagner, Florian Lemmerich, Mohsen Jadidi and Markus Strohmaier, "Inferring Gender From Names on the Web: A Comparative Evaluation of Gender Detection Methods', in *Proceedings of the 25th International Conference Companion on World Wide Web* (2016): 53–4.

A quick analysis of the data leads to the conclusion that for every woman, there were three men. Beyond this numerical difference – which could confirm the historical underrepresentation within international organizations and, more specifically, within organizations related to the League, as represented in the Handbook of International Organizations – it seems appropriate to inquire about how local, national and global systems of governance hindered or promoted the visibility of women.

Within the information gathered in the LONSEA records, we have identified the job title for each affiliated organization. This field contains 456 unique positions. For our analysis, we have chosen to cluster the diversity of jobs into 15 professional categories. Additionally, we distinguish between personnel from the League of Nations and those from other organizations in LONSEA. Based on these classifications, Figure 6.1 depicts the male–female ratio across these categories.

Figure 6.1:
Distribution of male–female proportions in types of jobs at the League of Nations and other organizations registered on LONSEA. We only represent the categories for which we have at least 30 records.

We can observe a higher number of women in roles such as librarians or working in documentation centres, performing activities as clerks or in personal assistant positions – regardless whether one is dealing with League of Nations staff or with external personnel that was associated with another organization.[15] These roles were related to administrative tasks and were aimed at providing support to management and leadership positions. They were not voluntary roles and some women developed successful careers because they obtained paid employment and started working within a profession, despite not being as widely recognized as others (for example, Marie Skłodowska-Curie or Gabriela Mistral). In this respect, the women's group of translators is particularly relevant as some of them attained a certain amount of public recognition. At the bottom of this figure, we can observe positions with a higher number of men. These roles include international delegates, and leadership and/or management positions, which were more aligned to the assumed tasks of cultural diplomacy. As a common practice of the time, multiple women and men with hereditary, aristocratic ranks and titles also occupied honorary positions. LONSEA provides information regarding their participation through the middle name field, which includes titles such as *princesse* (which is the case for Gabrielle Radziwill), *baronne*, marchioness, Sir, Lady, Baron, Duke of, among others. By selecting this subset of 814 actors, it becomes clear that both men and women belonging to the upper class were more abundant in higher positions compared to other roles such as those of clerks or personal assistants.

On a different note, we have also explored how many people were staff employees at the League and how many were staff employees also working at other organizations (see Table 1), so that we can have better insights into their stability or job insecurity. In this respect, we have examined the duration of their employment with the League and have concluded that the average for men was 4 years, and the average for women 2 years and 6 months. Thus, from a sample of 6,717 employees from other organizations and 5,637 staff members at the League, we can consider 33% of women regarding the staff personnel at the League, and 10% of women for staff members working at other organizations. Regarding the age of joining the League of Nations, the information comes from the personnel files used as sources in the LONSEA dataset. These files provide details such as the year of birth and the years of affiliation with each job position within the organization. From a subset of 3,014 personnel files from the League of Nations, which contain both the year of birth and the year of admission, we can infer the age at which these individuals joined the organization (Figure 6.2).

While the mean age for men is 32.9 ± 11.1 years old, women show a mean age of 28.2 ± 7.7 years old. The proportion of men and women at younger ages appears comparable. Also, a remarkable presence of 75 children (mostly women) aged between 12 and 16 years old is evident within the League of Nations workforce and according to the LONSEA database. However, as people aged, the representation of women significantly diminished, as women's employment in secretarial positions was mainly confined to unmarried women who stopped working when they got married. This suggests a potential intergenerational dominance of men, given the broader age distribution among them. For example, women who were already in their fifties were very few. Additionally, an examination of mean age according to gender and to their job positions reveals a correlation between older men occupying leadership and high-ranked positions.

[15] See also Myriam Piguet, "Gender Before Mainstreaming: The Integration of Women to International Civil Service in the Secretariats of the League of Nations and the United Nations, circa 1920–1975" (PhD thesis, Aarhus University, 2024); Myriam Piguet, "Gender Distribution in the League of Nations: The Start of a Revolution?", in T*he League of Nations: Perspectives from the Present*, ed. Karen Gram-Skjoldager and Haakon Ikonomou (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2019), 60–9.

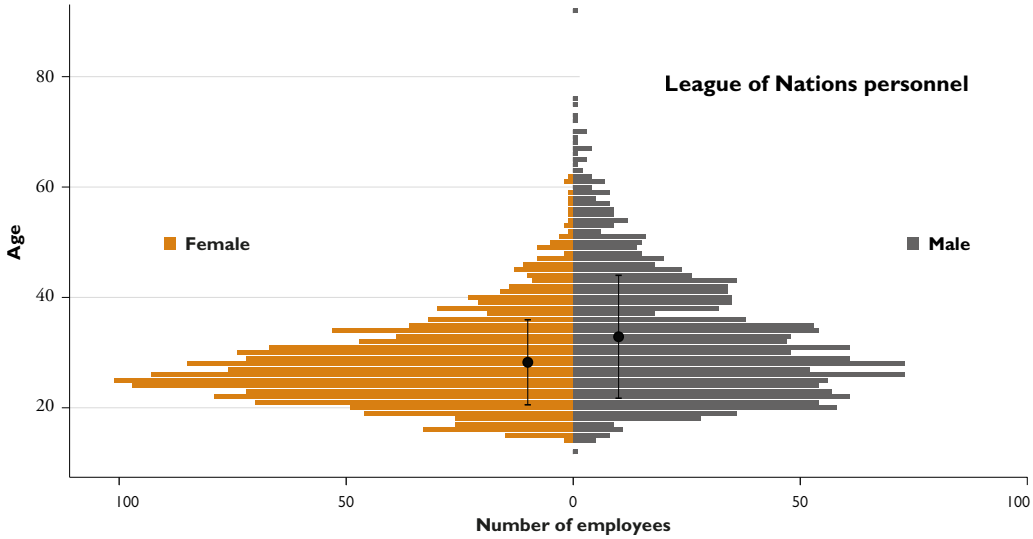
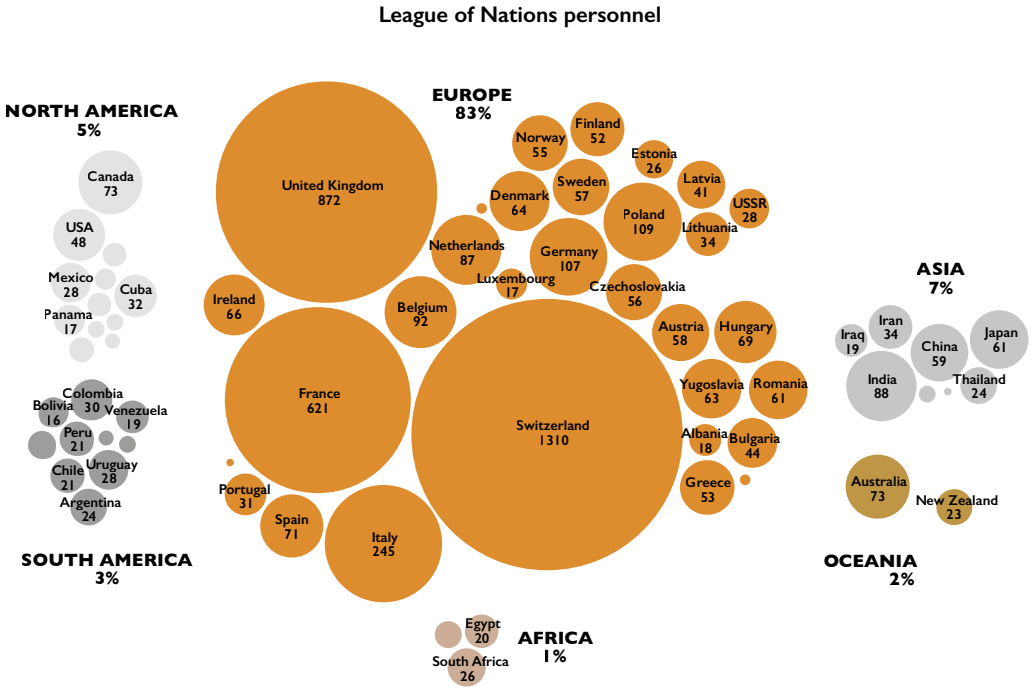


Figure 6.2:
Age distribution of men and women registered in LONSEA. The black dots denote the mean and standard deviation for both genders.

The LONSEA database also records the nationalities of 9,908 individuals. This has allowed us to understand the geopolitical origins of all participants in international diplomatic activities. While we acknowledge that national boundaries underwent important political transformations and many countries and former colonies moved their boundaries back and forth between the creation of the League of Nations in 1920 and its disappearance in 1946, we have normalized the names of historical nations and states to the snapshot that would have existed in 1920. Nationalities were particularly relevant for delegates from the so-called "peripheries", as it was fundamental for them to introduce themselves as equals, and not as representatives of former colonies. This was even more significant for Latin American women, as they were treated as the periphery of the periphery. In this respect, we intend to discuss the double peripherality of many women as an attempt to problematize membership at the League of Nations, the IIIC or any other international organization and explore forms of inclusion, exclusion and agency. On the other hand, the relevance of establishing a dialogue between the East and the West was also encouraged, and this also had an effect in the degree of inclusion of women according to their geographical origins and traditions in their countries.

In Figure 6.3, the nationalities of the League of Nations personnel and staff from other organizations registered in LONSEA are represented. The circles correspond to the number of members registered with that nationality and each country is coloured according to the continent to which it belongs. At first glance, it is clear that the central layer is dominated by European countries, reaffirming the geopolitical dominance of Western powers in the international forums of the time. However, when analysing the differences between the two groups, a notable shift in personnel composition beyond the League of Nations emerges. In the segment of other organizations, there is an increasing prominence of countries such as the United States, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Czechoslovakia.



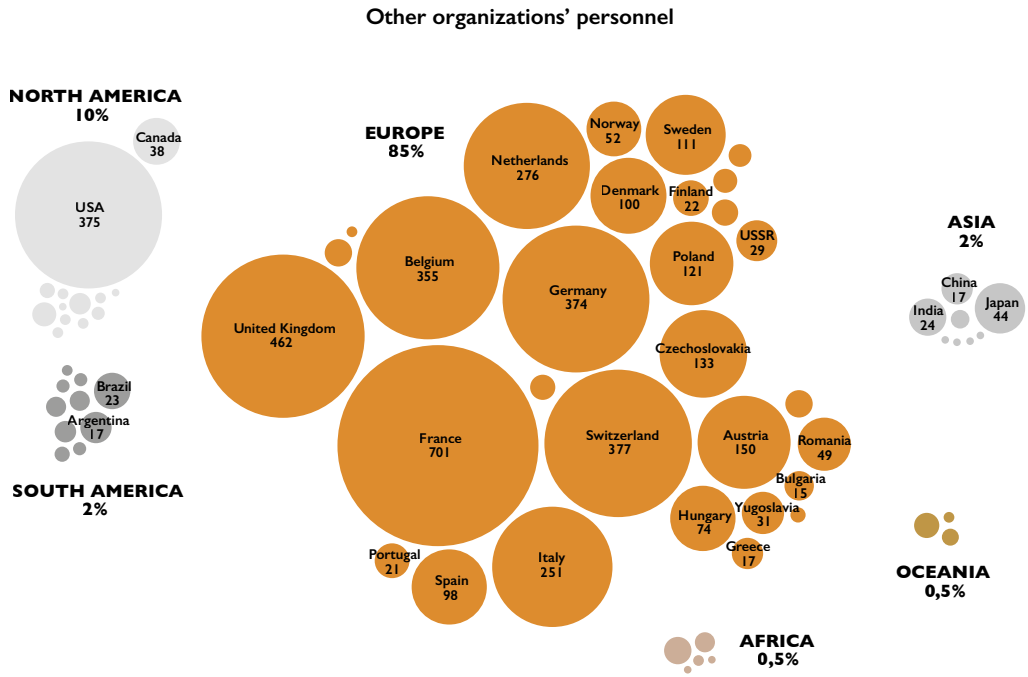


Figure 6.3:
Nationalities of the staff of the League of Nations (5,343 employees) and other organizations registered in LONSEA (4,565 employees).

The involvement of women in international affairs

The examination of international organizations reveals distinct patterns in their strategic goals, thematic focus, general concerns and an active or low engagement of women in international diplomacy. The LONSEA database shows that those organizations with a significant representation of women were mainly focused on the effective realization of women's rights, social and humanitarian causes, and legal and professional representation. In this sense, this confirms the fact, as also stated by Martin Grandjean, that most women who collaborated with the League bodies for intellectual cooperation were also members of these women's organizations.[16] Key examples include the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the International Federation of Business and Professional Women.[17] This diversity underscores the multifaceted involvement of women in international affairs, reflecting a commitment to both social and educational issues, as well as to the importance of professional development.

Conversely, organizations with a more significant presence of men exhibit a focus on business and industrial sectors, political and diplomatic spheres, and the development of technical fields. The International Organization of Industrial Employers, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International Criminal Police Commission highlight men's engagement in areas of global economic influence, political decision-making and technical expertise. These general patterns point to a gendered division in the types of organizations shaping international diplomacy during the historical period covered by 1,071 registered organizations in the LONSEA database.

In what follows, we will shift our attention to the complex relationships between agents, and try to reveal underlying patterns and dynamics that have influenced fundamental events and decision-making over time. Our main goal is to identify agents that could foster greater connectivity between institutions, and to explore if these individuals were predominantly women or men. In this respect, we remain conscious of how important movement and connectivity were at the time, and the extent to which political and everyday life was shaped through travelling to multiple countries. To this end, we frame our analysis in relation to historical network research, as there is a growing interest in this approach as applied to the study of intellectual cooperation and diplomacy.[18]

The members–organizations network

Understanding our object of study as a members–organizations network allows us to explore personnel mobility among the organizations included in LONSEA, considering those dedicated to intellectual cooperation. Additionally, it enables us to examine the proximity between organizations

[16] Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 66. See also Joyce Goodman, "Women and International Intellectual Co-operation", *Paedagogica Historica* 48, no. 3 (2012): 357–68; and Michel Marbeau, "Les femmes et la Société des Nations (1919–1945): Genève, la clé de l'égalité?", in *Femmes et relations internationales au XXe siècle*, ed. Jean-Marc Delaunay and Yves Denechere (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2007), 163–76.

[17] See also Leila Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Carol Miller, "'Geneva – the Key to Equality': Inter-war Feminists and the League of Nations", *Women's History Review* 3, no. 2 (1994): 219–45; Magaly Rodríguez García, "The League of Nations and the Moral Recruitment of Women", *International Review of Social History* 57, S.20 (2012): 97–128; Katarina Leppanen, "The Conflicting Interests of Women's Organizations and the League of Nations on the Question of Married Women's Nationality in the 1930s", *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 17, no. 4 (2009): 240–55.

[18] Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle"; Rubén Rodríguez-Casañ, Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, Albert Solé-Ribalta, Diana Roig-Sanz, Javier Borge-Holthoefer and Alessio Cardillo, "Analysing Inter-State Communication Dynamics and Roles in the Networks of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation", *Humanities & Social Sciences Commun* 11, no. 1408 (2024): 1–9.

Rank	Organizations with greater female presence	Rank	Organizations with greater male presence
1	International Women Suffrage Alliance	1	International Organisation of Industrial Employers
2	International Council of Women	2	World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship throughout the Churches
3	International Federation for Aid to Young Women	3	Inter-Allied Federation of Ex-Servicemen
4	Open Door International for the Economic Emancipation of the Woman Worker	4	International Chamber of Commerce
5	Inter-American Commission of Women	5	International Association of Recognised Automobile-Clubs
6	World Union of Women for International Concord	6	International Academy of Comparative Law
7	Associated Countrywomen of the World	7	International Broadcasting Union
8	World's Women's Christian Temperance Union	8	International Association for the Development of Linear Cities
9	Medical Women's International Association	9	International Union of Producers and Distributors of Electric Power
10	World's Young Women's Christian Association	10	Inter-Parliamentary Union
11	International Federation of Working Women	11	International Union of Tramways, Local Railways and Public Motor Transport
12	International Federation of Women Magistrates, Barristers and Members of Other Branches of the Legal Profession	12	International Academy of Diplomacy
13	International Federation of Business and Professional Women	13	International Institute for the Unification of Private Law
14	St. Joan's Social and Political Alliance	14	International Society for Contemporary Music
15	LoN Duplicating & Multigraph Service	15	Pan-American Geographical and Historical Institute
16	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom	16	International Bureau of Catholic Journalists
17	International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues	17	Institut des Hautes Études Internationales
18	International Federation of University Women	18	Union for the International Language (IDO)
19	LoN Stenographic Services	19	International Amateur Athletic Federation
20	International Committee of Schools for Social Work	20	International Criminal Police Commission

Table 6.1:
Organizations that cooperated with the League of Nations ranked by gender representation.

through shared personnel. The influence on international diplomacy can be measured in various ways, such as the role each member played in various events throughout the history of the League. However, this information has not been systematically collected, prompting us to propose an alternative method of evaluating personal influence in terms of connectivity between organizations. In other words, an individual who worked in three different organizations would have had greater influence on cooperation among these three organizations than the static personnel of each individual organization. Building upon this premise, we aim to identify the centrality of these individuals and infer gender influence. In this respect, as we will see below, a complex network approach provides a nuanced understanding of gender dynamics in terms of proximity and network connectivity within the LONSEA organizational framework. Bipartite networks have been particularly useful.[19] The network consists of two distinct types of nodes and the connections between them. Connections are only possible between nodes of different types, meaning that the two sets of nodes are disjointed.

[19] It is worth acknowledging that many real-world networks present this bipartition. For co-author networks, see Mark E. J. Newman, "Scientific Collaboration Networks: I. Network Construction and Fundamental Results", *Physical Review* E 64, no. 1 (2001): 1. For social networks: Stanley Wasserman and Katherine Faust, *Social Network Analysis: Methods and Applications* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). For company board networks, see Garry Robins and Malcolm Alexander, "Small Worlds among Interlocking Directors: Network Structure and Distance in Bipartite Graphs", *Computational & Mathematical Organization Theory* 10, no. 1 (2004): 69–94. For online division of labour networks, see e.g. Maria J. Palazzi, Jordi Cabot, Javier Luis Canovas Izquierdo, Albert Solé-Ribalta and Javier Borge-Holthoefer, "Online Division of Labour: Emergent Structures in Open Source Software", *Scientific Reports* 9, no. 13890 (2019): 1–11.

Consequently, we have constructed a bipartite, unweighted network in which individuals are connected to organizations documented in LONSEA.

To better understand the members–organizations system, we have analysed the main characteristics of the bipartite network. One notable structural feature is that only 11% of members were affiliated with two or more institutions. Additionally, the network reveals a wide range of organizational sizes, from those with a single member to those with as many as 1,668 members (as seen in the General Assembly of the League of Nations), with an average of 6 members per organization. Despite the fact that 89% of the individuals documented in LONSEA were affiliated with only one organization, the remaining individuals were sufficiently interconnected to ensure that the network's largest component is substantial, encompassing 78% of the individuals and 55% of the organizations.

In network analysis, various centrality measures help to quantify the importance of nodes within a network. One such measure is degree centrality, which gauges a node's significance by tallying its direct connections: essentially, the more connections (affiliations) a node (individual) has, the more important it is deemed to be. Thus, once we have represented the sequence of connections by gender, we can confirm a noteworthy similarity in the distribution between men and women, except for nodes with highest connectivity (Figure 6.4). In this regard, we acknowledge a predominance of men among nodes with a higher connectivity. This observation implies that, within the LONSEA network, men tend to show higher degrees of direct connections, suggesting a potential gender inequality in the distribution of network influence or prominence among individuals with substantial connectivity.

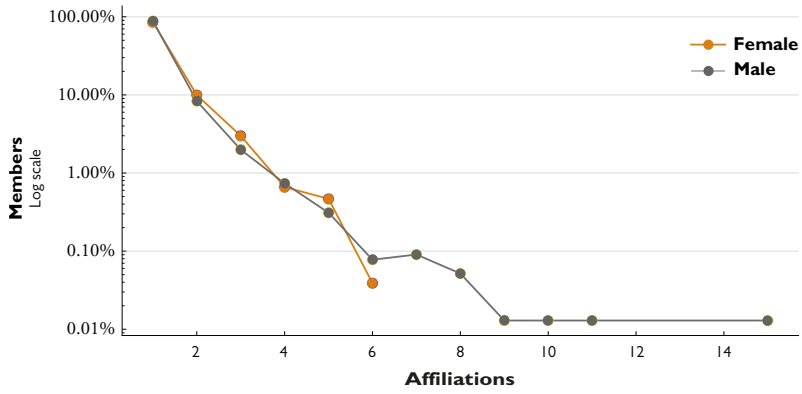


Figure 6.4:
Degree distribution of male and female members in the bipartite network. Degree distribution of male and female members in the bipartite network.

From a historical and sociological standpoint, this analytical approach enables the study of the affiliations of individuals to organizations. Meanwhile, from a complex system perspective, we may observe the relational dynamics of the LONSEA network, shedding light on patterns of mobility, organizational interdependence and gender-centric influences on the network centrality. By combining both perspectives, our research aims to unveil key figures that were instrumental in fostering connectivity among institutions and discern whether gender-related factors played a significant role in shaping these inter-organizational connections. Table 6.2 shows the top ten of men and women with the highest number of League-related affiliations.

	Women		Men
Rank		Rank	
1	Molina, Marie Louise	1	Dawson, Charles Watson
2	Donzelli, Felicita	2	de Vuyst, Paul
3	Thomson, Elsa	3	Politis, Nicolas
4	Dottrens, Yvonne	4	Perrott, Isambard Carlyle
5	Mayras, Louise Aimée	5	Tokugawa, Yorisada
6	Mansvetoff, Roussia	6	Ghislain, Henri Victor Marie
7	Nonin, Cosette Catherine	7	Herriot, Édouard
8	Dawson, Kathleen Violet	8	Konoye, Fumimaro
9	Harris, Constance Myra	9	Aghnides, Thanassis (Athanase)
10	Abensur, Barbara Naomi	10	La Fontaine, Henri

Table 6.2:
Men and women with the highest number of League-related affiliations.

Examining the records of these highly connected individuals reveals that their numerous affiliations with institutions may be attributed to two main factors, both of which exhibit a notable correlation with gender. On the one hand, men in this group often achieved high connectivity due to their accumulation of prestigious leadership positions, such as presidents, or honorary positions. For instance, Paul de Vuyst held a remarkable array of prominent roles in agricultural organizations, while Nicolas Politis served in key roles related to international law and workers' rights.[20] On the other hand, women's connectivity often stemmed from the accumulation of temporary or subordinate roles, particularly within organizations such as the League of Nations. For example, individuals like Marie Louise Molina frequently held clerk positions, while Roussia Mansvetoff worked as a copyist. These roles, while numerous, often reflected the precarious and less influential nature of their employment compared to their male counterparts. A more refined analysis, filtering for the specific roles performed within each institution, could further illuminate these patterns and provide a clearer understanding of how gender intersected with institutional interdependence and employment precariousness. This will be the focus of our future research.

[20] Paul de Vuyst was President of the International Commission for Instruction in Agriculture (1931–36), Honorary President of the International Federation of the Agricultural Press (1938), and Vice President of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (1936). Similarly, Nicolas Politis served as President of the Academy of International Law (1936), Chairman of the International Committee to Secure Employment for Refugee Professional Workers, and Vice Chairman of the International Institute of Constitutional History (1938).

Women at the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation

The central role of women can be also traced when analysing data from the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation. The digitization of their archival records, and the subsequent democratization of access, has allowed us to examine questions of global and gender representations. A specific focus on the IIIC can tell us more about the gender imbalance and the broader issues we have outlined above. It can also bring to the fore particular case studies that have been erased or not sufficiently addressed within existing scholarship. We have focused on two digitized collections of letters of the Paris-based Institute examining administrative and artistic/literary matters. By obtaining identifiable individuals from digitized documents, we have sought to unravel the interplay between data provided by LONSEA and the rich dataset of the IIIC.[21] While LONSEA registers 52 persons affiliated with the IIIC, we have compiled a list of 6,977 individuals mentioned in the IIIC's administrative and artistic/literary correspondence. There is a notable discrepancy when it comes to gender, with a significantly lower number of women compared to men – 609 females, 5,015 males and 1,353 of unknown gender (Figure 6.5). Furthermore, by exploring the interrelation between the two datasets, we have identified 389 individuals who appear in both the

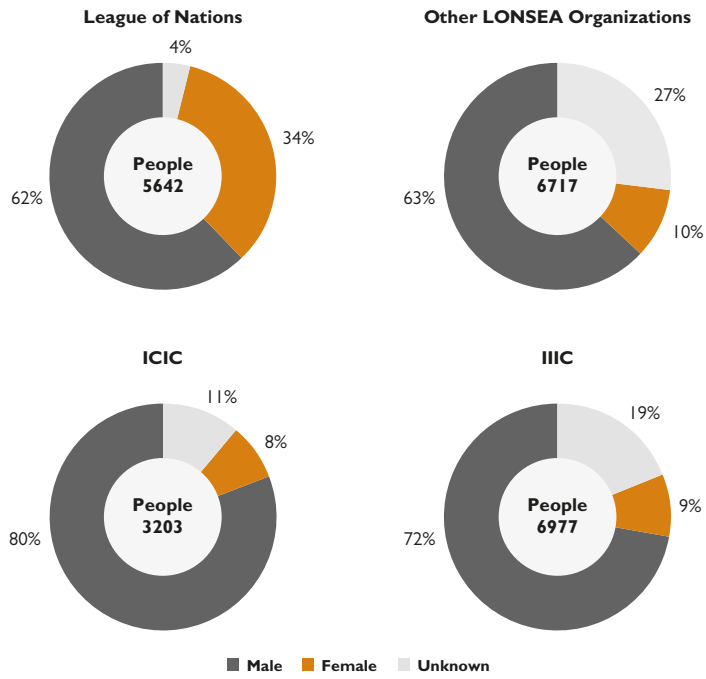


Figure 6.5:
Proportion of women and men in the League of Nations, other organizations recorded in LONSEA as well as the ICIC and IIIC datasets.

[21] Rubén Rodríguez-Casañ, Elisabet Carbó-Catalan, Jimena del Solar-Escardó, Alessio Cardillo, Ventsislav Ikoff and Diana Roig-Sanz, "People, Places, and Languages in the Correspondence Preserved in the Archive of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation", *CORA: Repositori de Dades de Recerca*, V2 (2024), available at https://doi.org/10.34810/data985 (last accessed 20 February 2025).

LONSEA database and the digitized archives of the IIIC. These 389 individuals are also related to other institutions according to the LONSEA records, hinting at the need for further exploration and refinement of semi-automatic person detection methodologies that may allow us to gain a deeper understanding of the League of Nations' history and its intricate relationships with neighbouring or satellite institutions.

Undoubtedly, to analyse the presence and networks of women in the IIIC, we should also focus on their work, trips and correspondence, but we cannot access all public and private archives. Thus, we have studied data gathered from three kinds of sources: the LONSEA database, as already mentioned, the data from our research findings on the presence of women in the administrative and artistic/literary correspondence of the IIIC archives and data based on the archives of the League's International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) between 1919 and 1927 (as compiled by Martin Grandjean).[22]

The general conclusion is that we can confirm a lower presence of women both at the ICIC and the IIIC. Women were often absent from cultural or political processes, and they occupied peripheral positions, as reflected by the gender imbalance in the League of Nation's institutions on intellectual cooperation, with women representing around 8%.[23] That said, we have identified three different large bodies of women working for the IIIC (Table 6.3). First, those women who rose within the organization and played relevant roles at the IIIC, ICIC or other related organizations as women diplomats or women in relevant positions in the hierarchy of the structure. Among them, one can note ICIC members such as Marie Curie and the Norwegian biologist Kristine Bonnevie. Some individuals were involved in National Committees of Intellectual Cooperation such as Edith E. Ware (secretary of the US committee), Amanda Labarca (president of the Chilean committee), Edith Lyttelton (British committee) and Virginia de Castro e Almeida (Portuguese committee). Another notable figure is the Chilean poet and diplomat Gabriela Mistral, head of the IIIC's Literary Relations Section, who also formed part of the governing body of the International Educational Cinematographic Institute. Finally, we would like to stress the roles undertaken by Nini Roll-Anker, the Norwegian playwright and novelist, and Hélène Vacaresco, as president of the International Committee for the Diffusion of Artistic and Literary Works by the Cinematograph (in 1931), the International Committee on the Rights of Speech (also as president in 1929) and the International Confederation of Intellectual Workers (as a general delegate between 1925 and 1929). These results are just some examples of women whom we found in the archives of the Paris Institute. Of all the IIIC sections, the Literary Relations Section was the only one led by a woman, Gabriela Mistral.[24]

Within a second group, we have identified women who worked as what has been called "le petit personnel", the public officials, which is the most abundant. After the First World War, women entered diplomacy through new professional opportunities, for instance as stenographers, secretaires, archivists, or professional translators. Besides these two groups of women, we may also point out a third group of women, the translators (such as Mathilde Pomès), as well as those

[22] To explore more about the data, see https://global-ls.github.io/int_cooperation-dataviz/ and, for further details, https://github.com/grandjeanmartin/intellectual-cooperation/blob/master/data/IntellectualCooperation_nodes.csv (last accessed 20 February 2025).

[23] Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 65.

[24] See Pita, "América (Latina) en París" and Carbó-Catalan, "Language and Translation Policies in the Intellectual Cooperation Organization" with regard to Mistral and the Ibero-American Collection of translations.

	Women working at the IIIC or the ICIC playing relevant roles		"Le petit personnel"		Translators and other women temporal collaborators	
Rank		f		f		f
1	Rothbarth, Margarete	150	Rothbarth, Margarete	229	Lagerlöf, Selma	8
2	Mistral, Gabriela	85	Civelli de Bosch, Madeleine	47	Kahn, Magda	6
3	van Dorp, Elisabeth Carolina	72	Zifferer, Wanda	15	Kallas, Aino	5
4	Vacaresco, Helene	64	Herzfeld, Ilse	15	Von Urbanitzky, Grete	5
5	Castro Almeida, Virginia	52	Nicolsky, Nathalie	14	Cruickshank, Helen B.	5
6	Radziwill, Gabrielle	51	Niestle, Alice	13	Gildersleeve, Virginia C.	4
7	Gildersleeve, Virginia C.	36	Aubertin, Renee	11	Herzfeld, Marie	4
8	Ware, Edith	25	Pastre, Germaine	11	Rothbarth, Margarete	3
9	Labarca, Amanda	24	Szarota, Elida	10	Goebel, Elinor	3
10	Gregory, Winifred	22	Pannier, Henriette	10	Olgierd, Stella	3

Table 6.3:
Most frequently mentioned women at the IIIC by groups (folders A and F). Columns f refer to the number of references.

women who either collaborated with the IIIC or in later commissions with ties to UNESCO (after the Second World War), without permanently working in the institution. For instance, Virginia Gildersleeve, a professor at Barnard College, New York, participated in the US delegation to the Second American Conference of National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation in Havana in 1941.[25] She was also a member of the International Federation of University Women. Beyond these women, we could think about those who hosted dinners and events. Most of them were the wives or the sisters of many men. These results indicate the extent to which women were present and highlight their respective influence, with Mistral standing in the second place, and according to the data from artistic/literary correspondence (folder F), and the German historian and IIIC official Margarete Rothbarth, according to our data in administrative correspondence (folder A). It is also worth noting that some of these women can also be featured in all three groups, as in the case of Rothbart or Gildersleeve, for two of these.

If we cross-reference the IIIC and ICIC datasets, we can observe how the individuals identified in the first group emerge as the most frequently mentioned women. We can highlight the French translator Marcelle Auclair, the Norwegian biologist and zoologist Kristine Bonnevie, the Chilean writer and diplomat Marta Brunet, the Chilean educator Amanda Labarca, the Chilean poet and diplomat Gabriela Mistral and the Argentinean writer and publisher Victoria Ocampo. We can also note the involvement of Henriette Pannier, Gabrielle Radziwill, Suzanne Dalsace, Adrienne Deltour, Helene Dorizo, Madeleine Fabre, Ilse Herzfeld, Simone Joly, Yvonne Liard, Camille Marbo, Colette Max, Blanche Musso, Mathilde Pomès, Madeleine Rostan, Margarete Rothbarth, Maria Stephan, Concha Romero James and Sophia Wadia. Some of them are well-known, others much less so. All these women promoted international exchange between writers and intellectuals, scientists, artists and university teachers. They came from different countries and regions and joined forces on a

[25] Corinne Pernet, "In the Spirit of Harmony? The Politics of (Latin American) History at the League of Nations", in *Beyond Geopolitics: New Histories of Latin America at the League of Nations*, ed. Alan McPherson and Yannick Wehrli (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2015), 135–53.

transatlantic scale through their professional and personal networks and their various travels and stays abroad, as well as the specific activities and tasks they were responsible for.

In noting the scale of this network, it is possible to anticipate its potential role in contributing to the building of modernity in its plural and multiple meanings, including a modern treatment of gender issues. Certainly, these women had privileged positions and most of them came from wealthy families, as was also the case for most men. Indeed, most of the young employees were trainees who spent a few months at the Paris Institute or at the League of Nations in Geneva to improve their professional skills and increase opportunities for their future employability in their respective national administrations. In this respect, we cannot forget how social class and ideology intervened in the social and professional development of these women, some of them having contradictory trajectories or political ideas.

Despite belonging to an elite group, these individuals stand out for their social commitment, albeit with varying stances in their approach to communism, feminism and pacifism. As prominent figures in their respective fields, they contributed to national and international debates on multiple topics such as literature and intellectual property rights, art and society, translation policies (the French-Romanian Hélène Vacarescu was a noteworthy member of the translation committee) or pacifism. Some of them also showed a keen interest in vindicating women's rights: this was the case with the Norwegian Nini Roll-Anker, the British activist, novelist and playwright Edith Lyttelton and with Gabrielle Radziwill. Indeed, the fact that many of these women started participating in diplomacy in more formal and professionalized ways points to the progress in the women's movement and their rights. One example was the Mexican Palma Guillén, who was the first Mexican female diplomat appointed as ambassador, worked at the Mexican Foreign Relations Secretariat, and appears 37 times in the letters of folders A and F in relation to the publication committee, the IIIC's *Entretien* in Nice (1938) and in relation to the correspondence between Mexico, Colombia and Chile. Another case worth noting is that of the Mexican Concha Romero James, who led the Division of Intellectual Cooperation of the Organization of American States. She also worked as editorial staff of the Pan American Union, and later served as an assistant cultural attaché at the Mexican Embassy in Washington, and as an expert in the Hispanic division at the Library of Congress. However, we also need to acknowledge that many women did not appear in the letters, given that their roles in the institution were often obscured and thus not mentioned in the correspondence.

Conclusions

This chapter has aimed to open several research paths in relation to the study of women's roles in intellectual cooperation. It has also sought to encourage reflection on how to combine a global history perspective and a gender approach with data-driven methodologies. We have sought to challenge gender stereotypes in intellectual cooperation, international relations and cultural diplomacy, and have proposed a quantified approach to existing datasets so that we can discuss women's representation at the League of Nations and the IIIC. As we have shown, women's roles as protagonists of cultural exchange and active agents in transnational historical processes at different scales and over time were linked to their social and political status. Our work stresses the value of retrieving names that have been forgotten and makes a case for rewriting international intellectual history, which traditionally has often ignored or obscured the role of women. Undoubtedly, women are increasingly being included in general national and global histories, and gender studies and feminism are well established fields in international relations. However, it has only been very recently that women's contributions to international political thought have been reappraised.[26]

Through a relational and data-driven perspective, based on new digitized sources and archives, we have shed light on the roles of specific women – not only those who are better known, but also on those who were often obscured despite being fundamental actors in the functioning of international organizations such as the League and the IIIC, and who definitely deserve further research. This chapter has identified them and explored their place in the hierarchy of these organizations, both in terms of their affiliation and their position in the structure. Many of these women worked as cultural mediators in the public sphere; others as cultural animators in the private sphere. Our research has offered some quantitative and qualitative insights into their roles, job positions, average time as employees, their nationalities, the most influential women in the data we have cleaned and examined, and the role of gender representation within organizations. However, we still need to explore their agency and concrete activities in more detail. Indeed, to restore women's agency and examine them as active agents of change, we would need to analyse individual cases to fully understand what they actually succeeded in doing and undertaking.

The names mentioned in this chapter involve a wide range of intellectual and political commitments that might be labelled as conservative, socialist or feminist. In this respect, further research must explore how these women related to potential international critiques at the time. It also needs to consider whether they established close friendships among themselves, by tracing networks of females working in intellectual cooperation. We anticipate that these women networks of solidarity may have, for example, fostered inter-American relations, as with the case of Edith E. Ware and Virginia Gildersleeve's aims to tie to other Latin American colleagues. Not only with those who belong to the elite of women involved in intellectual cooperation internationally (the Chilean Gabriela Mistral, the Argentinean Victoria Ocampo or the Mexican Palma Guillén), but also to other women who were lesser known in the international arena such as the Dominican Ana Teresa Paradas, the Cuban Flora Díaz Parrado or the Brazilian Rosalina Coelho Lisboa Miller. The same goes for women diplomats on both sides of the Atlantic. In this sense, our research has already

[26] Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler, eds, *Women's International Thought: A New History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Patricia Owens, Katheria Rietzler, Kimberly Hutchings and Sarah C. Dunston, eds, *Women's International Thought: Towards a New Canon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021); Patricia Owens, *Erased: A History of International Thought Without Men* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2025).

proved that women were included to some extent in state and local governing bodies, whether they were feminist or not. A next step will be to examine how their inclusion in the League's working dynamics was embedded in the framework of transnational movements of resistance and cross-border activism in favour of women's rights. This would also mean taking a new look at the male discourses of the time and a specific idea of white European masculinity, and to contribute to avoiding, in the historiographical domain, the reproduction of the symbolic violence experienced by women. To do so, we must analyse their overlooked movements and networks, deepen individual case studies and explore their presence in multiple archives scattered all over the world. This is undoubtedly a collaborative venture, for which this chapter hopefully provides some pointers.

In conclusion, a critical intellectual history that may connect international relations, cultural diplomacy and gender politics from a global perspective is highly needed if we aim to examine the historical experiences of women in the *longue durée* or in relation to their role in intellectual cooperation and transnational macro-historical processes. There is not enough space in this chapter to delve into all these issues, but we would like to stress the need for further analyses and research along those lines. Only a politically situated approach applied to the history of intellectual cooperation – still too Eurocentric, Western and white – may help us to understand structural inequality and also struggle in the contested category of women, which deserves further research.

7

Gabrielle Radziwill:

The Story of an Eastern European Princess at the Service of Intellectual Cooperation

Monika Šipelytė

This chapter sheds light on women's involvement in the League of Nations and, more specifically, its work in the field of intellectual cooperation. The existing literature frames the League's creation in terms of "the paradigm of new, multilateral, public-oriented international relations" and highlights contexts in which informal connections and networks as well as technical knowledge and expertise were of central importance.[1] These areas opened up spaces for women, because – in an apparent shift from the secret diplomacy of the pre-war years – international relations involved the creation of networks for "international bureaucracy and multilateral conference techniques".[2] Knowledge-based problem solving and semi-formal networks had been used by women's organizations since the nineteenth century and flourished during the interwar period and within the framework of the League. As Carol Miller stated, none of the proposals of gender-specific issues would have been considered without the support of women delegates from different countries as well as League officials, indicating the importance of women's networks during the interwar period.[3] For this reason, it is important to examine not only how women were involved in international diplomacy and intellectual cooperation, but also how they changed it from the inside.

As a case study, this chapter analyses the story of the Lithuanian princess and activist Gabrielle Radziwill (1877–1968). Given her involvement in multiple League activities, Radziwill's example is well suited to indicating the possibilities for women's involvement in the League system. At the same time, her activities also shed light on Lithuanian involvement in international cooperation. Although the official staff registry of the League Secretariat listed ten individuals as "Lithuanians", only five were not temporary collaborators: three of them were personnel of the Second Division and only two succeeded in rising up to the First Division of the League's hierarchy.[4] Amongst them, Radziwill was an exceptional case: she was the first woman to serve as a "Member" (that is, in a non-clerical capacity) in the League's Information Section, and her overall work for the League covered a very long time span, from 1920 to 1938.[5] This chapter traces Radziwill's career within the League, which had started elsewhere in the system but which by 1934 had taken her to the Intellectual Cooperation Organization of the League.

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1 Madeleine Herren, "Gender and International Relations through the Lens of the League of Nations (1919–1945)", in *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500*, ed. Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 183.

2 Ibid.

3 Carol Miller, "'Geneva – the Key to Equality': Inter-War Feminists and the League of Nations", *Women's History Review* 3, no. 2 (1994): 219–45, 235.

4 Haakon A. Ikonomou, Yuan Chen, Obaida Hanteer and Jonas Tilsted "Visualizing the League of Nations Secretariat – a Digital Research Tool" (2023), available at https://visualeague-researchtool.com/ (last accessed 14 August 2024).

5 "Radziwill (Mlle) G.J.A.M.", Personnel Files, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), S861/166/2955.

Women's activism and involvement in the League of Nations

Women's participation in, and significance for, the diplomacy of the interwar period is still predominantly traced via the international activities of women's organizations and the struggle for women's rights. Such work has attracted extensive scholarly attention.[6] In recent decades, the question of women's roles in the diplomacy of the League of Nations in particular has also become more prominent.[7] The voice of women activists was clearly heard in the international organizations that emerged after the First World War and their involvement was important for the visibility of women activists in the international realm. Moreover, international organizations provided a public space for women to address a range of global issues as well as the chance to become involved in their resolution.[8]

International organizations had to deal with many different languages, cultures and ways of communication, rendering ideas of international peace and intellectual collaboration central to their operation. This provided numerous opportunities for women activists. As Leila J. Rupp states: "By exploring women's participation in the establishment of the League, organizational attitudes toward the international body, and the campaign to win woman a role in League policymaking, we can see that the history of international governance would not have been the same without the participation of the transnational women's groups."[9]

Such observations lead us to this chapter's protagonist, who represented both an international and intercultural activist not only for women's rights, but also for international cooperation more broadly. Princess Gabrielle Jeanne Anne Marie Radziwill was born in Berlin in 1877 into the noble Lithuanian family of Radziwill (Radvilos), which in the middle of the sixteenth century received the title of *Reichsfürst* from the Holy Roman Emperor. Her family belonged to the Nesvizh branch, which still has living descendants. During the First World War, Radziwill spent two years working as a nurse for the Russian Red Cross on the Russian-Persian front in charge of the local hospitals.[10] After the October Revolution, she fled Russia because of the persecution and confiscation of all of her savings.[11] We do not have much information of how Radziwill gained her Lithuanian passport, but it was a common practice of the newly established Lithuanian state to give citizenship to the descendants of noble families if they requested it.[12] The documents allowed her to move to London and later Geneva, where she joined the League of Nations in its formative stages.[13]

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6 Leila J. Rupp, *World of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997); Karen Offen, *Globalizing Feminisms, 1789–1945* (London: Routledge, 2009).

7 Susan Pedersen, "Metaphors of the Schoolroom: Women Working the Mandates System of the League of Nations,", *History Workshop Journal* 66, no. 1 (2008):, 188–207; Magaly Rodríguez García, "The League of Nations and the Moral Recruitment of Women,", *International Review of Social History* 57, S20 (2012): 97–128; Regula Lugi, "Setting New Standards: International Feminism and the League of Nations' Inquiry into the Status of Women", *Journal of Women's History* 31, no. 1 (2019): 12–36.

8 Daniel Laqua, *Activism Across Borders since 1870: Causes, Campaigns and Conflicts in and beyond Europe* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023), 202.

9 Rupp, *World of Women*, 210.

10 Myriam Piguet, "Employées à la Société des Nations: carrières et conditions de travail, 1920–1932", Monde(s), no. 19 (2021): 61; Herren, "Gender and International Relations", 187.

11 Letter from Radziwill to Eric Drummond, W.[ickham] Steed Esc., 25 September 1920, UNAG, S861/166/2955.

12 The citizenship and an actual Lithuanian passport of Radziwill are mentioned in a registry document of the League of Nations: "Reseignements demandés pour les passeports, etc.", UNAG, S861/166/2955.

13 As Madeleine Herren suggested, "Aristocrats such as Radziwill (who was related to the high nobility of Germany, Russia, Poland and England) literally translated status attributes into global expertise and offered their services as interpreters and translators to the LoN after the war": Herren, "Gender and International Relations", 187.

Being a refugee herself, Radziwill clearly understood the importance of protecting women and children during conflicts and the significance of empowering women through international associations. In 1925, representing the League of Nations at a council meeting of the International Council of Women (ICW), she argued that "the League needs the work of woman, and we women need the League of Nations' help".[14] At the time, Radziwill was already the League's official responsible for relations with voluntary organizations and her comments illustrate her belief in the entwined goals of the League and of bodies such as the ICW – a view she reiterated in later years.[15]

Princess Radziwill began her career as an assistant secretary at the League of Nations Assembly in the autumn 1920. Prior to this, she had had a connection with Eric Drummond – Secretary-General of the League – through two British friends, the journalist Henry Wickham Steed and the diplomat John Duncan ("Don") Gregory: her personal file in the League Archives includes two recommendation letters with requests to find her a job in the newly established organization. Initially, Drummond noted that he only had a vacant position for a stenographer. After a few months, however, Radziwill began her work as an assistant as a result of efforts by Pierre Comert, head of the League's Information Section.[16] In one of the supporting letters, Don Gregory described her as "exceedingly intelligent, quatro-lingual (English, French, German and Russian, all equal), a great knowledge of many countries and certificated as a Shorthand writer, typist and book-keeper".[17] This description matches with Drummond's desire of forming the Secretariat from the staff of different countries, who were appointed by the League and not by national governments.[18]

The experience of working together and pursuing common professional goals led to a long-lasting friendship between Drummond and Radziwill. Although the archival record only features professional exchanges, the letters between them have a friendly tone, display a respectful attitude towards one another and suggest great trust in facing new common challenges. One of her first contacts at the League – Pierre Comert – also relied on Radziwill's competence and abilities, resulting in her becoming the first woman to be appointed as Member of the Information Section in 1927.[19]

These observations prompt one to reflect upon the main factors that could result in a woman's successful career in an international organization: was it an aristocratic origin or an experience of wartime volunteering and intellectual work? How important was a national background, especially being from a newly established country? The favourable attitude and trust from the Government of Lithuania towards Radziwill's work was certainly helpful.[20] In 1925, the country's delegate to the

[14] ICW, *Women in a Changing World: The Dynamic Story of the International Council of Women since 1988* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), 54, also cited in Rupp, *Worlds of Women*, 212. As noted in ICW, W*omen in a Changing World*, 54, apart from Radziwill representing the League, the meeting also included a representative of the International Labour Organization, Martha Mundt.

[15] Laura Beers, "Advocating for a Feminist Internationalism Between the Wars", in *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics*, ed. Sluga and James, 207. See also Radziwill's comments in 1931, noting the role of international women's organization in helping shape "public opinion on international questions" and promote "international understanding", as quoted in Rupp, *Worlds of Women*, 221.

[16] Letter from Eric Drummond to Henry Wickham Steed, 28 September 1920; Pierre Comert, 15 October 1920, UNAG, S861/166/2955.

[17] Letter from Don Gregory to Eric Drummond, 27 September 1920, UNAG, S861/166/2955.

[18] Karen Gram-Skjoldager and Haakon A. Ikonomou, "Making Sense of the League of Nations Secretariat: Historiographical and Conceptual Reflections on Early International Public Administration", *European History Quarterly* 49, no. 3 (2019): 420–44, 429.

[19] J. Gueybaud, "Les femmes et la Société des Nations", *Le mouvement féministe: organe officiel des publications de l'Alliance nationale des sociétés féminines suisses*, no. 15 (1927): 3.

[20] Myriam Piguet has described this case as a successful exception to the rule: Piguet, "Employées à la Société des Nations", 61.

League of Nations 6th General Assembly, Dovas Zaunius, wrote to the Secretary-General that the Princess deserved to be promoted to the senior post as a Member of the Section due to her support in effective communication between Lithuania and the Secretariat.[21] In the annual personnel report, Radziwill regularly received the highest evaluations and recommendations for higher positions, better payment and expressions of gratitude for her work. For example, Comert wrote in a report in 1926 that her work was done "in the most efficient manner possible" and stated that "due to her good character and cleverness her colleagues of the Section appreciate her very much".[22]

From information to intellectual cooperation

The Information Section was seen as the vanguard of one of the League's key missions, namely to create an "open diplomacy" in contrast to the secret treaties and alliances said to have caused the war of 1914–18. It served the Secretariat, the Council and the Assembly and thus permeated most of what the League of Nations was doing. As further discussed in Pelle van Dijk's contribution to the present volume, the Section's officials were expected to acquire a broad knowledge of the League's work and explain it to the public.[23] Due to the fact that Radziwill had started to work there early on in the Section's history, she managed to establish two channels of communication – with diplomats from various countries and with women's organizations – in her position and made these networks useful in the future questions on intellectual, social and political matters.

But why was her work so important for Lithuanian diplomats and politicians? Working as a member of Information Section until 1931, she was responsible for gathering information on the Baltic States and their neighbours. Due to her knowledge of Russian, German, French, English, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian, she was able to submit huge amount of local press reviews, recommendations for the diplomats and members of the Secretariat who were dealing with those countries. For example, in June 1929, Radziwill joined a League of Nations delegation to Lithuania, headed by Under Secretary-General Yotaro Sugimura (Figure 7.1). A few months later, she provided the League Secretariat with a summary about recent changes in the Lithuanian government.[24] In this report, she commented on each person, stating not only basic facts, but also her personal impressions and evaluation of political behaviour. Special attention was paid to the politicians who might lead the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and here the Princess had strong opinions on the best candidate and possible impacts on international politics. This summary demonstrated her strong understanding of national issues as well as constant attempts to build up direct connections with Lithuanian leaders.

Moreover, Radziwill corresponded with different Lithuanian intellectuals and discussed ways to improve the country's participation in international organizations. This was one of the missions of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) – to facilitate the exchange of information and better understanding of existing organizations. Later on, the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC), founded in Paris in 1925–26, joined this mission and became

21 Letter from Dovas Zaunius to Eric Drummond, 18 December 1925, UNAG, S861/166/2955.

22 Pierre Comert, Septennial report, Mlle. G. Radziwill, Member Intermediate Class, Information Section, 30 October 1926, UNAG, S861/166/2955.

23 See also Emil Eiby Seidenfaden, *Informing Interwar Internationalism: The Information Strategies of the League of Nations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024); Eric Koenen, ed., *Communicating the League of Nations Contributions to a Transnational Communication History of the League of Nations in the Inter-War Period (1920–1938)* (Geneva: United Nations, 2024).

24 Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to Yotaro Sigimura, 28 September 1929, UNAG, R1851/1A/10697/10697.

Figure 7.1:
League of Nations delegation on a visit to Lithuania, 22–26 June 1929. Gabrielle Radziwill is depicted at the centre, standing next to League Under-Secretary-General Yotari Sugimura. *Source:* Lithuanian Central State Archive, image reference P-22076.

the executer of these goals: "soon, it was no longer simply a secretariat but a real executive centre for intellectual cooperation, which made the link between the Committee (and the Section) and the National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation that were created in many countries".[25]

A friendly connection with Sofija Čiurlionis – the widow of a famous Lithuanian painter and composer, who herself was one of the first Lithuanian women to play an internationally recognized role in politics and diplomacy – facilitated Radziwill's involvement in cooperation on social and cultural matters. Čiurlionis was representing the country at the League of Nations by the late 1920s, serving as a member of the Lithuanian delegation in the sessions of the League Assembly in 1929–31 and 1935–38.[26] In a letter to her daughter, Čiurlionis explained how she met Radziwill: this happened in the spring of 1929 at the reception of Prime Minister of Lithuania Augustinas Voldemaras, who had gathered Lithuanian intellectuals to greet the Princess on a mission in Kaunas.[27] Afterwards, the two women met in Geneva and became colleagues and friends: contemporaries remember that this connection was mutually beneficial and continued in social, cultural and even in political matters.[28]

While Radziwill worked for League, Čiurlionis represented Lithuania internationally. Both cooperated in shared actions such as the preparation of documents and in lobbying for the abolition of prostitution in Lithuania.[29] Even though these efforts were unsuccessful, the interactions highlight Radziwill's respectable position vis-à-vis the Lithuanian government and her ability to raise important social questions. Radziwill and Čiurlionis also cooperated in the decoration of the Lithuanian Hall in the League's new premises, the Palais des Nations, where every member nation had the opportunity to showcase their national style and craftsmanship.[30] This cultural diplomacy assignment was taken very seriously: the two women discussed the artistic and financial requirements needed to fulfil the project, the colours they would use and the need to do all the work by hand.[31] The installation of the new rooms and halls devoted to the different countries all over the world was to symbolize the unity and prosperity of the nations, which could be achieved in international organizations. As a small country, Lithuania did not want to be left behind when it came to displaying its achievements

[25] Martin Grandjean, "The International Bureaux and Intellectual Cooperation Section", in *League of Nations Secretariat Research Guide* (2023), available at https://libraryresources.unog.ch/LONSecretariat/intellectual (last accessed 20 August 2024).

[26] Letter from the Permanent Delegation of Lithuania to the League of Nations to Joseph Avenol, 16 August 1938, UNAG, R5252/15/33511/33481; Sofija Kymantaitė-Čiurlionienė, LONSEA, available at https://lonsea.de/pub/person/12345 (last accessed 26 August 2024).

[27] Letter from Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė (Sofia Čiurlionis) to her daughter Danutė Čiurlionytė, 23 April 1929, in Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė, *Raštai* [Writings], vol. 5, *Laiškai 1906–1944* [Letters 1906–1944] (Vilnius: Lietuvos literatūros ir tautosakos institutas, 2011), 211; Eglė Kačkutė, "Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė", in *Lietuvių rašytojų takais Šveicarijoje: sugrįžimų apybraižos* [Following the Footsteps of Lithuanian Writers in Switzerland: Sketches of Returns], ed. Jūratė Caspersen (Kaunas: Naujasis lankas, 2009), 184.

[28] Valentinas Gustainis, *Nuo Griškabūdžio iki Paryžiaus* [From Griškabūdis to Paris] (Kaunas: Spindulys, 1991), 211–12; Valentinas Gustainis was a Lithuanian journalist who joined the Lithuanian delegation to the 10th Assembly of the League of Nations: see LONSEA, available at https://lonsea.de/pub/person/5493 (last accessed 27 August 2024).

[29] Letter from Sofija Čiurlionis to Gabrielle Radziwill, 4 October 1932; Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to Sofija Čiurlionis, 12 October 1932, in Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė, *Rašta*, 284–6; Eglė Kačkutė, "Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė – lietuvių visuomenės veikėja tarptautinėje erdvėje" [Sofija Čiurlionienė-Kymantaitė – a Lithuanian Public Figure in the International Sphere], *Lyčių studijos ir tyrimai* [Gender Studies and Research], no. 10 (2012): 12–13.

[30] Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to Joseph Avenol, 5 May 1936, UNAG, R5401/18B/16468/199.

[31] Letter from Sofija Ciurlionis to Gabrielle Radziwill, 1 May 1936, UNAG, R5401/18B/16468/199.

in architecture and art. In this case, it was an attempt to combine national and international; a way of using soft power to achieve national goals in the name of "internationalism" and "cooperation".[32]

Radziwill was known in Lithuania for, among other things, discussing international social problems and searching for solutions through the League. Of course, the main source of the information for the public were the journals and books published by the League itself and by the IIIC. However, Lithuania's National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation – whose activities will be discussed further in the next section – dedicated one volume of the popular Lithuanian cultural journal *Naujoji Romuva* to issues faced by the League in 1934. Along with the leaders of these organizations and representatives of Lithuanian diplomacy, Radziwill contributed to this collection, discussing "The Actions of the League of Nations in the Field of Childcare" and "International Action in Healthcare".[33] These texts illustrated the main work the Princess was known for, the perspective from which she was represented by the authorities and, perhaps, how she personally wished to be represented. Moreover, the questions of "social" feminism and work for international cooperation – the two central aspects of her works – were connected here. As Carol Miller states, "she believed that the political and civil rights of women were no less international than the child welfare questions treated by the Leagues social committees".[34] Instead of supporting new laws to promote women's equality, Radziwill suggested the gathering of scientific data on the legal, social, economic and political status of women in each country, arguing that this could provide a solid basis for the decisions and changes required.[35]

The significance of international organizations for newly established small European countries

Political integrity, stability and intellectual cooperation were very important for newly created states in Eastern Europe and helped to secure recognition from Western states. Politicians, diplomats, scientists and figures from non-governmental organizations were active in making connections with intellectuals from different countries.[36] As for Lithuania, these unofficial connections were crucial because there was no permanent Lithuanian delegation at the League of Nations between 1927 and 1937.[37] As a result, individuals interested in Lithuania maintained other forms of contact and communication.

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[32] Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique internationale*, no. 52 (2011): 56. On the broader role of cultural diplomacy during the interwar period, see Benjamin Martin and Elisabeth Piller, "Cultural Diplomacy and Europe's Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: Introduction", *Contemporary European History* 30, no. 2 (2021): 149–63.

[33] Kunigaikštytė Gabrielė Radvilaitė, "Tautų Sąjungos veikla vaikų globojimo srityje" [The Activities of the League of Nations in the Field of Child Welfare] and "Tarptautinė sveikatos apsaugos akcija" [An International Healthcare Campaign], *Naujoji Romuva* [New Romuva], no. 190–1 (1934): 588–9 and 589–90 respectively.

[34] Miller, "Geneva – the Key to Equality", 253.

[35] Marilyn Carr, *Women, the League of Nations and the United Nations: A Story in Three Parts*, (UNESCO/UNITWIN Network on Gender, Culture & People-Centered Development: Boston, Global Network of UNESCO Chairs on Gender: Buenos Aires), 2020, 8, available at https://bafuncs.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/UNCRP-Carr-LON_27Dec2020-Final-version.pdf (last accessed 21 February 2025).

[36] Alfonsas Eidintas, Vytautas Žalys and Alfred Erich Senn, *Lithuania in European Politics: The Years of the First Republic, 1918–1940* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 60–5. For a review of the latest historiography: Monika Šipelytė, "Juozo Gabrio veikla Tautų Sąjungos užkulisiuose: žurnalistika ar diplomatija?" [Juozas Gabrys' Activities behind the Scenes at the League of Nations: Journalism or Diplomacy?], *Lietuvos istorijos studijos* [Studies in Lithuanian History] 48 (2021): 33–51, 34–6.

[37] Monika Šipelytė, "Lithuania in the League of Nations: An Analysis of the Networks of Juozas Gabrys", *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte* 72, no. 3 (2022): 397.

The documents of Lithuania's National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation reveal the complicated nature of such matters. At the first Council meeting of the newly established International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation on 3 November 1926, the Mixed Committee on Intellectual Statistics was created. At the beginning of the following year, it circulated the survey which was to be completed by the National Committees of Intellectual Cooperation, also specifying the guidelines these committees were to follow.[38] The Lithuanian Committee of Intellectual Cooperation had been created as early as 1922 at the University of Lithuania (renamed Vytautas Magnus University in 1930). Unfortunately, it was not very active and did not participate in data gathering at first.[39] While in Lithuania, cultural fields such as the cinema or archives did not have a modern bureaucratic system that would have facilitated the provision of information needed, the IIIC appealed to the Lithuanian delegates at the League of Nations and succeeded in securing some statistics on intellectual life in Lithuania, notably in publishing.[40] The main problem of these communications was that from 1925 until 1929, the Lithuanian Committee for Intellectual Cooperation was not active at the national level and did not participate in international events.

From 1929 to 1930, the only topic in communications between IIIC and the Lithuanian Committee regarded the possibility of sending French history books to Lithuanian libraries, schools and, primarily, to the University of Lithuania in Kaunas.[41] The poor material situation was closely connected to the fact that the National Committee itself was not active, because professors and the university rector, Vincas Čepinskis, who was the committee's chairman, saw such involvement as a formality: political questions overshadowed other possible means of communication with the League.[42] As a result, the National Committee did not play an important role in the intellectual field of Lithuania in the 1920s. This changed during 1930s, but only after tensions between the ICIC administration and Vytautas Magnus University. This conflict generated substantial documentation and here we find a connection between the activities of Radziwill in the field of intellectual cooperation and her connection with Lithuanian diplomacy.

In this period, Radziwill's role within the League of Nations had changed. From 1931 to 1934, she worked at the Social Questions and Opium Traffic Section of the League. In 1929–30, she had even been in the running to replace Rachel Crowdy at the post of the director of the Section, but her candidacy was rejected. The official reason was the fact that her status had been that of a more junior 'B' member. The historian Myriam Piguet has, however, noted that a lack of support from women's organizations, which provided advice during the appointment process, may have been a key factor.[43] While this stance was perhaps surprising, given Radziwill's past links to women's organizations, it

38 IIIC, "Programme d'un Statistique Annuelle de l'Activité Intellectuelle", Statistiques 1930–1936, UNESCO Archives, FR PUNES AG 01-IICI-CFCE-B-E-1.

39 Letter from Oskar Halecki to Pierre Avizonis, Rector of Lithuanian University, Kaunas, 7 December 1925, UNESCO Archives, FR PUNES AG 01-IICI-A-III-1.

40 Statistiques intellectuelles/Lituanie (Lithuanie), UNESCO Archives, FR PUNES AG 01-IICI-B-X-44.

41 Letter from Ignas Jonynas to Julien Luchaire, 22 January 1929, UNESCO Archives, FR PUNES AG 01-IICI-A-III-1.

42 Giršas Rutenbergas, *Tautų Sąjunga: jos idėjos plėtojimosi ir susikūrimo apžvalga, organizacija, tikslai, Lietuvos klausimai T. Sąjungoj ir T. Sąjungos paktas* [The League of Nations: An Overview of its Development and Creation, Organization, Goals, Lithuanian questions at the League of Nations and the Covenant of the League of Nations] (Kaunas: D. Gutmanas, 1931).

43 Piguet, "Employées à la Société des nations", 69–70.

was tied to wider debates within both the League and women's organizations as to the separation of the League's work on social matters on the one side, and opium trafficking on the other.[44]

In 1934, Radziwill officially joined the Intellectual Cooperation and International Bureaux Section, where she worked until 1938. Here, she continued cooperating with different women's organizations and participated in their events as a representative of the Secretariat and its Intellectual Cooperation branch. Radziwill's vast expertise was demonstrated by the variety of topics she worked on, including education, feminist matters, art, politics, bureaucracy and internal communication. After two years in that role, Massimo Pilotti, Radziwill's manager, praised the "speed with which Miss Radziwill has familiarized herself with questions of intellectual cooperation and I can only congratulate myself for the precious assistance she provides to the section" while also noting her ongoing role in liaising "with numerous organizations".[45]

Of course, there were some additional duties, which were sometimes performed on the direct orders of her superiors and sometimes on a voluntary basis. As one example from Lithuania shows us, Radziwill's attitude and support could be advantageous when problems arose. In 1933, the IIIC sent its regular survey of intellectual life to Lithuania and unexpectedly received the answer that the questions asked were outside the competence of the university and that Lithuania's National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation had been dissolved due to the shortage of funds and personnel.[46] Čepinskis, the Rector of Vytautas Magnus University, declared that he was in favour of practical international intellectual cooperation and the ideas of the League of Nations in that field, but he also pictured these activities as a duty of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Education. He considered it the government's responsibility rather than the responsibility of his committee.

Officials within both the League's Intellectual Cooperation Organization (ICO) and the League Secretariat considered this message to be regrettable. They therefore sought to use all possible means to overturn this dissolution with the help of Secretariat and Lithuanian diplomats. And here, after some time, Princess Radziwill stepped up her efforts to communicate between the agents of opposing views regarding the usefulness of practical work in fostering international intellectual connections. Her intervention convinced Lithuanian diplomats at the League of Nations (Vaclovas Sidzikauskas) and the Lithuanian representative in Paris (Petras Klimas) to improve communications with the IIIC and to prevent the closure of the National Committee. A letter from IIIC director Henri Bonnet, expressing his appreciation for Radziwill's help, reveals that she convinced both sides that the Lithuanian committee would continue its work, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would provide guidance and the university could keep its connections as a scientific and cultural institution.[47]

From that year on, an intense and more fruitful relationship between IIIC and the Lithuanian Committee began and the latter participated quite actively in the international work of the ICIC. In 1935, the Lithuanian Committee organized the first conference in Kaunas bringing together the Baltic

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44 See Eric Drummond's comment that that women's organizations "were distinctly in favour of the Opium from the Social question", and opposed a woman taking on the two roles in combination: Minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Appointments Committee, held on the 27th September, 1929, 15, UNAG, S966/265/2.

45 Massimo Pilotti, Certificate as to Grant of Annual Increment, Princess G. Radziwill, 7 April 1936, UNAG, RADI-RAJ, S861/166/2955.

46 Letter from Vytautas Čepinskis to the Director of IIIC, 18 January 1933, UNESCO Archives, FR PUNES AG 01-IICI-A-III-1.

47 Letter from Henri Bonnet to Jean-Daniel de Montenach, 18 February 1933, Ibid.

National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation to promote university exchange programmes and the popularity of the committees in different states.[48] We do not have any information as to whether Radziwill participated in these events, but all the copies of later correspondence between the Lithuanian Committee and the IIIC were sent directly to her. In other words, her constant attention to Lithuanian questions while working for the League was certainly a part of facilitating better relations.

The tension between administrative work and national issues

As we have seen, tension between nationality and international duties was an important issue in the political field, so even personal views could be used for propaganda. In April 1935, Radziwill was participating in the International Women's Congress in Istanbul, responsible for liaisons between the League of Nations and the International Alliance of Women. After the event, she agreed to give an interview to a French-Turkish newspaper *La Turquie* and, as a result, was accused by the Polish delegation at the League of Nations of anti-Polish propaganda. The idea expressed in the article which outraged the Polish diplomats was the sentence about Lithuanian goal to recapture the city of Vilnius which, following the Polish-Lithuanian War, had become part of the Second Polish Republic: "we all have the only one goal: to see Wilno and the Lithuanians who are not the part of our community returning to Lithuania. The Government would lose its authority if it withdraws from this programme."[49] The issue of Lithuanian-Polish conflict over Vilnius and its surrounding region was one of the main unsolved problems (important not only to Lithuanians) in the League of Nations throughout the interwar period.[50] As such, every aspect of the question was considered carefully by the diplomats. A few weeks later, the Secretary General initiated an investigation on this publication and its authenticity and Gabrielle Radziwill denied authorizing the publication or the thoughts expressed in it. In her letter to the Secretary General M. de Azcarate she explained: "I insisted on the fact that I was not a Lithuanian delegate and dismissed the reporter who was quite evidently sent to discuss Polish-Lithuanian relations and not the League of Nations *as I was told* […] After this experience I refused all further interviews, but unfortunately the mischief was done."[51]

After some months of research and explanations, this interview was evaluated as almost certainly fake and arranged by personal opponents. The princess had a lot of relatives from different countries involved in European diplomacy and not all of them were content with her successful career in the League. After this event Radziwill stated that "I work as much for Poland as for my country, as much as for any country which is the member of the League of Nations".[52] This was more than just rhetoric: the officers of the Secretariat were obliged not to express their political views publicly. Radziwill tried to adhere to this principle, especially in sensitive Lithuanian matters, even if she did not always succeed.

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48 Letter from Dovas Zaunius, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania and Konstantinas Šakenis, Minister of Public Education of Lithuania, to the ICIC, 22 June 1936, Ibid.

49 "Déclarations de la Princesse Gabrielle Radziwill", *La Turquie*, no. 561 (17 April 1935): 2.

50 Gintautas Vilkelis, *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos santykiai Tautų Sąjungoje* [Lithuanian–Polish Relations at the League of Nations] (Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2006), 7–8, 202–3.

51 Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to M. de Azcarate, 6 May 1935, UNAG, S861/166/2955.

52 Ibid.

Conclusions

Radziwill's work with women's organizations and in the League started in the early 1920s and we can trace the quick expansion in the areas of her interests and achievements. Her activities thus illustrate how involvement in the League's work for intellectual cooperation – which for Radziwill was particularly the case in the 1930s – could build on a wider international trajectory. Several aspects are notable in this regard. First, connections with women's organizations in the League of Nations became more and more important during the interwar period and Radziwill made a significant contribution to this. This comprised not only formal relations, but also intellectual debates with different branches of feminists in search of compromises in social and legal questions – although this activism was not always helpful in her career path.

Second, a vast network of connections, noble birth, proper education and self-learning were important qualities for her successful career, although other factors had an impact as well. Her knowledge of Baltic and Eastern European issues and languages helped her succeed during her work in the Information Section while her longtime activities in women's movements assured confidence in her grasp of education and health questions. Even though these questions were then assumed to be "women related", our analysis has shown that they were tightly connected with national and international political decisions as well.

Third, since her attention to Lithuanian matters and questions related to the international participation of Lithuanian organizations, it also allowed her to take steps in the field cultural diplomacy. For Lithuanian politicians and diplomats, she was an important connection within the highest ranks of the League and they used this for cultural and intellectual influence when there was no possibility of succeeding in the political field. Some examples that have been analysed in this chapter show us that the opinion of the Princess in political matters was valued and discussed, so we should not rely on the concept of political neutrality there. Finally, it is important to underline that these conclusions are very brief highlights emerging from the surviving archival record, which cover but a fraction of Radziwill's extensive and wide-ranging activities.

8

Shaping Future Elites:
The Information Section Supporting Intellectual Cooperation

Pelle van Dijk

"The youth of today will constitute the public opinion of tomorrow". Issued in 1935, this declaration by the Advisory Committee on League of Nations Teaching – a sub-committee of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) – emphasized the importance of education in creating "the peace of tomorrow".[1] The discussion of educational materials was a key issue for the ICIC during the interwar period. At the same time, a different department, the League's Information Section, saw the importance of targeting younger audiences. Gabrielle Radziwill – an Information Section official whose career is further discussed in Monika Šipelytė's chapter in this book – expressed similar views on the relationship between youth and future public opinion, adding that they would also constitute "the governments of tomorrow".[2] Clearly, it was felt that educating the youth would help in shaping a new generation that would understand the importance of the international organization.

While discussions on teaching reforms took place in the League bodies for intellectual cooperation, this chapter shows how officials in Information Section launched practical efforts to educate public opinion in general, and children and students in particular. Where states prevented the ICIC in creating and distributing educational material, the Information Section similarly had no mandate to create propaganda for the international organization.[3] Recent publications have shown how its officials nonetheless lobbied for the League.[4] In so doing, protagonists from the Information Section discussed how public opinion in member states could be improved and maintained close contact with influential individuals in such states, including civil society actors that set up League of Nations societies in different countries. This chapter traces the overlapping work of the ICIC and the

[1] Ken Osborne, "Creating the 'International Mind': The League of Nations Attempts to Reform History Teaching, 1920–1939", *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2016): 213.

[2] Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to Information Section director Pierre Comert, 26 February 1923, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R1339 22/26866/26866x. These thoughts on the importance of future public opinion also existed amongst the politicians that had shaped the League, see Daniel Laqua, "Activism in the 'Students' League of Nations': International Student Politics and the Confédération Internationale des Étudiants, 1919–1939", *English Historical Review* 132, no. 556 (2017): 622.

[3] For an overview of the discussions on the role of the ICIC in education, see Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle. La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018), 157–8.

[4] Pelle van Dijk, "Conducting Diplomacy for the League: The Missions of Secretariat Officials", A*dministory: Journal for the History of Public Administration* 7, no. 1 (2024): 52–66; Emil Eiby Seidenfaden, *Informing Interwar Internationalism: The Information Strategies of the League of Nations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2024). Pelle Van Dijk, "Internationalism on the Big Screen: Films on the League of Nations", *Studies in Communication Sciences* 23, no. 1 (2023): 51–66; Pelle Van Dijk, "'We Must Work with a Missionary Spirit': The League of Nations Information Section and Public Diplomacy" (PhD thesis, European University Institute, 2022); Emil Eiby Seidenfaden, "The League of Nations' Collaboration with an 'International Public', 1919–1939", *Contemporary European History* 31, no. 3 (2022): 368–80; Isabella Löhr and Madeleine Herren, "Gipfeltreffen im Schatten der Weltpolitik: Arthur Sweetser und die Mediendiplomatie des Völkerbunds", *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 62, no. 5 (2014): 411–24.

Information Section. After examining several national case studies, the chapter demonstrates how officials from the Information Section cooperated with a range of associational bodies and non-state actors to put the ICIC's ideas on education into practice.

The Information Section's participation in intellectual cooperation

The work of the ICIC and the Information Section overlapped in several fields. ICIC members and Information Section officials took an active interest in journalists, cooperating with them both at the League's premises in Geneva and in the member states. For the ICIC, the press had a role to play in what was termed "moral disarmament", which centred around the idea that future conflict could be averted by increasing the mutual understanding between people in different nations.[5] As historian Heidi Tworek notes, journalists were supposed to disseminate information and help establish new discursive norms on peace.[6] League officials accordingly tried to support what they considered to be the professionalization of journalism. In Geneva, officials of the Information Section and the ICIC cooperated with the International Association of Journalists Accredited to the League of Nations, whose members received identity cards authorized by the League's Secretary-General.[7] Information Section officials also participated in the preliminary meetings of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), taking place in the mid-1920s on premises of the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation in Paris.[8]

Starting preparations in 1926, the League Secretariat organized a series of conferences for press experts – held in 1927, 1932 and 1933 – to which it invited managers of news agencies, international journalists and government press officials.[9] In 1927, at what was the first independent conference organized by the League, representatives of the press discussed various technical issues such as the regulations of press rates, identity cards and censorship.[10] In the context of the League's efforts for moral disarmament, discussions in the early 1930s about the role of the press in safeguarding peace are particularly noteworthy. The IFJ planned a Court of Honour for international journalists, which had to tackle the dissemination of inaccurate and "irresponsible" news by foreign correspondents.[11] In preparation of the 1933 conference, the League called for proposals on how to stop the "spread of false information which may threaten to disturb the peace or the good understanding between nations".[12] Efforts in this field continued in the late 1930s, when the League proposed a Convention on the Use of Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace.[13] Neither of these discussions led to lasting

5 The idea of moral disarmament originated in the French context, and was adopted by the ICIC in the early 1930s, see: Mona L. Siegel, *The Moral Disarmament of France: Education, Pacifism, and Patriotism, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Heidi Tworek, "Peace through Truth? The Press and Moral Disarmament through the League of Nations", *Medien & Zeit* 25, no. 4 (2010): 16–28; Juli Gatling Book, "Utopian Dreams, National Realities: Intellectual Cooperation and the League of Nations" (PhD thesis, University of Kentucky, 2016).

6 Tworek, "Peace through Truth", 22; Seidenfaden, *Informing Interwar Internationalism*, 49–50.

7 Frank Beyersdorf, "First Professional International: FIJ (1926–40)", in *A History of the International Movement of Journalists: Professionalism Versus Politics*, ed. Kaarle Nordenstreng et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 101.

8 Beyersdorf, "First Professional International", 82–3.

9 On the conferences, see Tworek, "Peace through Truth?", 23–5; Beyersdorf, "First Professional International"; David Goodman, "Liberal and Illiberal Internationalism in the Making of the League of Nations Convention on Broadcasting in the Cause of Peace", *Journal of World History* 31, no. 1 (2020): 169–70.

10 Beyersdorf, "First Professional International", 95–8; Tworek, "Peace through Truth?", 24.

11 Beyersdorf, "First Professional International", 105.

12 Tworek, "Peace through Truth?", 24.

13 Goodman, "Liberal and Illiberal Internationalism".

agreements. And the League's proposals backfired. US press agencies, in particular, rejected a self-regulating mechanism and many other states did not want to cede any sovereignty to the IFJ's proposed court.[14] Press representatives mostly urged the League to open its own meetings, so that journalists would have access to accurate information on the League.

Cinematography was another area in which the tasks of the ICIC and Information Section overlapped. The League was active at a time when film became a mass medium. Public opinion theorists such as Walter Lippmann debated the influence of images on the human brain, and national governments were active in educational cinema.[15] Benito Mussolini's Italian government took a particular interest in this topic and brought debates on the use of cinema and intellectual cooperation together in the International Educational Cinematographic Institute (IECI) in Rome.[16]

Bodies in the field of intellectual cooperation mostly discussed how film could promote peaceful international relations, but officials in the ICIC and IECI never considered making films on the League itself. Nevertheless, the Information Section was often involved in debates on how to disseminate the values of the League through film. It had already established a cinematographic service in the 1920s, but officials mostly assisted production companies in making recordings for newsreels. The League of Nations societies – civil society organizations that promoted the League's work and ideals in various states – had created films that were considered successful. Both the ICIC and the Information Section were in touch with these organizations.[17] The movies of the British League of Nations Union (LNU), *Star of Hope* (1926) and *World War and After* (1930), were shown to over half a million children, and the ICIC requested and received the script of a successful movie made by the Dutch League of Nations' society.[18] Throughout the interwar period, the Information Section had an uncomfortable relationship with film, as officials worried that film production would be considered propagandistic. It did, however, participate in some experiments in this area, culminating in a full-length film, *The League at Work*, in the late 1930s.[19]

The Information Section and the ICIC cooperated most closely in the field of education. Indeed, different bodies concerned with intellectual cooperation – the ICIC, the IIIC and the IECI – all had long-standing interests in education. As early as 1921, the League's Assembly prevented the ICIC in creating or distributing its own educational material, as this was seen as the prerogative

14 Beyersdorf, "First Professional International", 116.

15 Glenda Sluga, "Hollywood, the United Nations, and the Long History of Film Communicating Internationalism", in I*nternational Organizations and the Media in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Jonas Brendebach, Martin Herzer and Heidi Tworek (London: Routledge, 2018): 138–9.

16 For more context on the Italian fascist government's interest in this organization and the League, see Elisabetta Tollardo, *Fascist Italy and the League of Nations*, 1922–1935 (London: Palgrave, 2016), 30–2; Zoë Druick, "The International Educational Cinematograph Institute, Reactionary Modernism, and the Formation of Film Studies", *Revue Canadienne d'Études Cinématographiques / Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 16, no. 1 (2007): 80–97; Christel Taillibert, "Le cinéma d'éducation et le projet internationaliste de la SDN: La brève histoire de l'Institut international du cinéma éducatif", *Relations internationales* 183, no. 3 (2020): 95–112; and Benjamin Martin's contribution to this volume.

17 Van Dijk, "Internationalism on the Big Screen"; Seidenfaden, *Informing Interwar Internationalism*, 54–5.

18 Letter from Henri van der Mandere to Gustave Kullmann, member of the Intellectual Cooperation Section, 'League of Nations Film', 30 March 1932, UNAG, R2276, 5C/35655/28132.

19 Van Dijk, "Internationalism on the Big Screen"; Helle Strandgaard Jensen, Nikolai Schulz and Emil Eiby Seidenfaden, "Film-Splaining the League of Nations," in *The League of Nations: Perspectives from the Present*, ed. Haakon A. Ikonomou and Karen Gram-Skjoldager (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2019), 201–10.

of the member states.[20] Historians such as Ken Osborne have shown, however, how individuals in the ICIC urged educators to revise textbooks so as to forge an "international mind".[21] Meetings resulted in plans to reshape education, especially history teaching, in an attempt to create emphasis on similarities amongst nations rather than their differences.

In the early 1920s, the Information Section also explored the role the League could play in this field. League of Nations societies reached out to it in 1923, asking whether the Secretariat could provide a handbook chapter on the importance of international organization. These societies argued that they would in turn try to get this chapter included in national educational curricula. Information Section officials discussed this request and the League's Secretary-General added that it was "obvious that if we could get a chapter concerning the League of Nations into the Text Books of Primary Schools, it would be a great advantage".[22] In the end, however, this request was unviable, as the Assembly had, in line with the limits put on the ICIC, ruled out activity of the Secretariat in this regard.

The Information Section maintained, however, that matters of education were relevant for the section. As noted at the outset of this chapter, Radziwill believed that the Secretariat would need to shape the public opinion of tomorrow, creating a generation for which the League was anchored as an important actor in a stable world order. The perception of the youth as future statesmen and opinion-shapers made children and students an important part of the long-term strategy of the Information Section. To engage with younger generations, the ICIC and the IIIC in Paris encouraged travelling. The IIIC in Paris fostered student internationalism and facilitated university exchanges by collecting and publishing all available exchange programmes and funding opportunities.[23] In the publication *The Aims, Methods, and Activity of the League of Nations*, the Secretariat articulated such notions explicitly. In the long term, cultural exchanges would strengthen the respect between nations: "A young man from one country who has travelled under normal conditions to another, and has had genuine contacts with his contemporaries there, seldom fails to bring back sound ideas about that country, and often develops a keen appreciation of its merits."[24]

Together with the ICIC and the League of Nations societies, the Information Section coordinated a number of educational programmes alongside a series of summer schools in Geneva.[25] The summer schools in Geneva have not gone unnoticed by historians. For the ICIC, the summer school was an ideal setting in which students from different nations would learn about each other's cultures. As with university exchange programmes, the IIIC gathered information on all summer schools taking place throughout Europe and published a comprehensive list.[26]

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20 Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle", 157–9.

21 Osborne, "Creating the 'International Mind", 219–20. See also Xavier Riondet's contribution in the present volume.

22 Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to Pierre Comert, 22 February 1923, UNAG, R1339, 22/26866/26866; Letter from Eric Drummond to Pierre Comert, 2 March 1923, UNAG, R1339, 22/26866/26866; Letter from Gabrielle Radziwill to Theodore Ruyssen, president of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, 20 March 1923, UNAG, R1339, 22/26866/26866.

23 For more on interwar student internationalism, see Laqua, "Activism in the 'Students' League of Nations"; and League of Nations Secretariat, *The Aims, Methods, and Activity of the League of Nations* (Geneva, 1938), 150.

24 International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation, *University Exchanges in Europe* (Paris: IIIC, 1929).

25 See Ilaria Scaglia, *The Emotions of Internationalism Feeling International Cooperation in the Alps in the Interwar Period* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 61–2; Anne-Isabelle Richard, "Between Publicity and Discretion: The International Federation of League of Nations Societies,", in *Organizing the 20th-Century World: International Organization and the Emergence of International Public Administration, 1920–60s*, ed. Karen Gram-Skjoldager and Haakon A. Ikonomou (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 152; Laqua, "Activism in the 'Students' League of Nations", 629–30; Thomas R. Davies, "Internationalism in a Divided World: The Experience of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, 1919–1939,", *Peace & Change* 37, no. 2 (2012): 246.

26 International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, *Holiday Courses in Europe in 1928* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928).

The British LNU organized a summer school in Geneva from 1923 onwards and hosted 350 school children at the height of its popularity in 1937.[27] The International Federation of League of Nations Societies started with similar summer schools in 1927 and offered parallel programmes in English, French and German for students coming to Geneva. Alfred Zimmern – influential British scholar and deputy director of the IIIC in Paris – and his wife, the musician and educator Lucie Zimmern, organized the even more elaborate Geneva School of International Studies, bringing students together for eight weeks.[28] Across several summers in the 1930s, the LNU organized a special weekend for high school teachers who had accompanied the school children to their summer school.[29] This was an opportunity to train the teachers in spreading the League's ideals in the classrooms.

These different organizations cooperated closely with the Information Section in creating such programmes. The list of speakers often featured prominent League officials, which shows that the Secretariat took its role as host seriously. At the Zimmern school in 1927, 42 of the 77 speakers were or had been affiliated to the League or the International Labor Organization. Directors of technical sections, such as Arthur Salter of the Economic and Financial Section and Ludwik Rajchman of the Health Section, described the activities of their department. When the League's Secretary-General was in Geneva during the summer school, he would often provide a speech to open the gathering.[30] In a memo, Information Section official Konni Zilliacus recognized the importance of such addresses and the summer schools more broadly: "Only a few words will be required – how glad the Secretariat is to lend its premises and some of its member for facilitating these courses because the League is based on public opinion, and therefore the work of these schools in educating public opinion is fundamental."[31]

These summer schools were not accessible to all. Usually, the Secretariat and the organizing societies did not cover the costs of travelling, which meant that many participating students had to fund their own trips. In some cases, summer schools offered bursaries, but they were mostly used to guarantee participation from different countries. In their correspondence with the Secretariat, the organizations were also boasting about the "quality" of applicants; a representative of the British LNU wrote in 1936 that "Some of our greatest public schools are sending boys and there will be groups of girls from many well-known girls schools".[32] These activities, as in other areas, were aimed at shaping the governments of tomorrow. This focus aligns with other elitist activities of the ICIC and the general focus on elites by the Information Section.[33] As we will see, similar patterns are visible in educational activities that took place around the world.

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27 Helen McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations: Democracy, Citizenship and Internationalism c. 1918–45* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 114.

28 Lucie Zimmern's central role in this venture has recently been acknowledged: Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler, "Polyphonic Internationalism: The Lucie Zimmern School of International Studies", *The International History Review* 43, no. 4 (2023): 623–42.

29 Letter from the League of Nations Union to Gustave Kullmann, 5 July 1934, UNAG, R5172, 13/11230/1744.

30 See for instance, the programme for the International Summer School of the League of Nations 1932, UNAG, R3303, 13/34669/3408.

31 Letter from Konni Zilliacus to the Secretary-General's Office, 16 August 1932, UNAG, R3303, 13/34669/3408.

32 Letter from Maxwell Garnett, secretary of the LNU, to Joseph Avenol, 10 July 1936, UNAG, R5172, 13/24836/1744.

33 For the Section's elitist conception of public opinion, see Van Dijk, "Conducting Diplomacy for the League"; Seidenfaden, *Informing Interwar Internationalism*, 67; Van Dijk, "We Must Work with a Missionary Spirit", 200; much of the work of the ICIC also had an elitist nature, see for example, Elisabet Carbó-Catalan "Literary Translation: Between Intellectual Cooperation and Cultural Diplomacy: The Ibero-American Collection (1930–1940)". *Translation in Society* 2, no. 1 (2023): 27–8.

Supporting educational work around the world

To gain a deeper insight into how the Information Section enacted the ICIC's ideas on education, it is important to explore how League officials cooperated with actors in the member states. While most plans were made in Geneva, officials of the Secretariat travelled all over the world, and the Information Section remained in touch with local actors. By considering a variety of different countries, the influence of different local political realities on the role of the League becomes clear. As we shall see, local authorities held contrasting views on the prospect of League education in India, the Netherlands, the United States and Italy.

The role of League officials was most obvious in countries where the Information Section had special branch offices. During the interwar period, the section operated offices in London, Paris, Rome, Tokyo, Berlin and Bombay.[34] While the offices were officially conceived as information centres, they had clear value for the Section's promotional work. Sources for the India office have been well preserved and offer a unique insight into how Secretariat officials targeted younger audiences. The Leagues was an active presence in imperial India, the only member of the international organization that was not self-governing. The fight for self-determination dominated India in this period, while the British Empire controlled Indian foreign policy.[35] Despite the initial hopes of Indian nationalists at the end of the First World War, the League had no intention to challenge the imperial government, and this meant that imperial actors dominated the activities of the League's office. At the opening of the office in 1932, an imperial official warned section director Pierre Comert that "we should absolutely avoid anything which might have a political aspect. [The official] advised us to limit ourselves to such matters as education, health, etc."[36] Comert made sure his officials acted in accordance with this demand.

Reports of the office's director, Manjipra Venkateswaran, show how League officials in India subscribed to the ICIC's ideal of creating a sense of international cooperation amongst future generations. The officials in the bureau mostly corresponded with colleagues in the Information Section in Geneva, but they were aware that their work benefitted the League's broader activities in the realm of intellectual cooperation. Venkateswaran reported to Geneva that "the Indian Bureau has been helpful in promoting the spirit of Intellectual Co-operation through the children of the country and through lectures in the University centres on Internationalism".[37] In a report on the activities 1933, Venkateswaran argued that he tried to encourage the youth to acquire "habits of mind based on the principle of international co-operation".[38] He toured India, and his correspondence shows that he gave the majority of his speeches at schools and universities, often in and around Bombay. Apart from lecturing students themselves, he also visited teacher training colleges and attended meetings of teacher federations. He gladly accepted invitations from such organizations, as this work corresponded with the League's goal of creating a larger network of sympathizers amongst teachers.

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[34] Van Dijk, "We Must Work with a Missionary Spirit', 46–50; Tomoko Akami, "The Limits of Peace Propaganda: The Information Section of the League of Nations and Its Tokyo Office", in Brendebach et al., *International Organizations and the Media*, 70–90.

[35] Joseph McQuade, "Beyond an Imperial Foreign Policy?: India at the League of Nations, 1919–1946", *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48, no. 2 (2020): 263–95.

[36] Memorandum from Section director Pierre Comert to Section official Amulya Chatterjee, 12 May 1932, UNAG, R3436, 18A/23268/23268.

[37] Letter from Manjipra Venkateswaran to Chatterjee, 29 June 1934, UNAG, Pelt Papers, 193/14.

[38] Report from Manjipra Venkateswaran on his activities between April 1933 – February 1934, UNAG, R5370 18A/7216/1426.

In his reports to Geneva, he discussed the extent to which the League was being taught in schools in different provinces.[39]

Venkateswaran's work was supported by League correspondents in other cities. Short-time correspondent T. S. Ramanujam demonstrated that the faith in the internationalist potential of future generations could be taken too seriously by some League officials. In March 1933, he visited two elementary schools in Madras, where he lectured children between the age of five and ten. Despite their young age, he was happy to see that "their questions did not betray a spirit of bigoted nationalism and they readily agreed with me in thinking that the best interests of nationalism are truly served by advancing the cause of internationalism as preached and practiced by the League".[40] This quote is emblematic of the League's work in India. Hope existed that future generations would be more ready and eager to accept a world order based on the League's style of international cooperation, and at the same time youth was deemed to be a more receptive audience. While the officials made real efforts to disseminate League ideals – as evidenced by the ICIC and the Information Section – within schools, this work in a supposed non-political field was somewhat detached from the political reality, as the fight for self-determination dominated interwar India.

The situation was easier for the League in the Netherlands. The Information Section did not open a branch office here; however, its Dutch member Adriaan Pelt monitored public opinion in the Netherlands. Pelt cooperated closely with Henri van der Mandere, who was in charge of the Dutch League of Nations Society – the Vereeniging voor Volkenbond en Vrede (Association for the League of Nations and Peace) – but also served as a correspondent to the Secretariat.[41] Van der Mandere published articles in the Dutch press, translated League publications and sent reports about the state of Dutch public opinion to Geneva. As in India, League officials understood the importance of targeting younger audiences. In a 1921 report, Pelt discussed how he was setting up collaborations between Dutch university libraries and the library of the Secretariat in Geneva after noticing that the League had become a popular topic amongst students.[42] Cultivating ties with universities would have its effect in the long term, as he argued: "I do not need to reiterate the importance of this kind of activities with those that are ultimately destined to lead their countries."[43] In line with his colleagues in the Information Section, he saw future elites as suitable target audiences for the League's work.

As branch offices of the Information Section only existed in larger states, most of the work in the Netherlands was done by Vereeniging voor Volkenbond en Vrede.[44] The Dutch association had a specific youth education committee that reported on its progress in including information on the League within both primary and secondary education. As in other countries, the society organized annual national prize competitions on the League, offering a scholarship for the summer school of

39 Report from Manjipra Venkateswaran on his activities in 1934, 2–10, UNAG, R5370 18A/7216/1426.

40 Report from T. S. Ramanujam on his work from 17 March – 16 April 1933, undated, part of the correspondence between Information Section officials Chatterjee and Ramanujam, UNAG, Pelt Papers, 193/14.

41 Report from Henri van der Mandere over August 1921, 28 August 1921, UNAG, R1334, 22/17057x/5130.

42 Report from Pelt on his mission to the Netherlands in May 1921, 1 June 1921, 9, UNAG, R1334, 22/13485/5130.

43 Report from Pelt on his mission to the Netherlands in May 1921, 1 June 1921, 20–21, UNAG, R1334, 22/13485/5130, translated from French.

44 Anne-Isabelle Richard, "Between the League of Nations and Europe: Multiple Internationalisms and Interwar Dutch Civil Society", in *Shaping the International Relations of the Netherlands*, 1815–2000, ed. Ruud Van Dijk et al. (London: Routledge, 2018), 97–116.

the International Federation of League of Nations Societies in Geneva. In 1928, the society held a similar competition for young teachers, asking for entries which answered the question "how do you teach a first lesson on the League of Nations for 11-to-13-year-old students".[45]

The United States, famously, did not become a member of the League. It was, however, involved in some of the activities of the League and Americans were always represented at the ICIC. As in the Netherlands, a lively League movement existed in the United States. Various historians have discussed the American League of Nations Association (LNA) and its place in interwar American politics.[46] Secretariat officials kept a close watch on how the debate on internationalism developed throughout the interwar period. Most notably, the American League official Arthur Sweetser of the Information Section stayed in close touch with the US-based League movement.[47] He collaborated with individuals such as Raymond Fosdick, who worked for the Secretariat in 1919, but also became a central figure in the LNA. In a lobbying role, Sweetser tried to steer the LNA in the direction that he deemed most suitable for the Secretariat.

Occasionally, League officials visited the United States and lectured to various audiences on the importance of League programmes. Often, they cooperated with philanthropic organizations.[48] Rachel Crowdy, director of the section on Social Questions and Opium, wrote an extensive report on her visit to North America in 1926. The LNA thought that the League's work in the field of human trafficking and slavery was particularly popular with the many civil society organizations in the United States, so the six-week visit of this particular director was not a coincidence. The press had followed the tour closely and therefore she concluded that "this visit to America should have some propaganda value for the League".[49] Pierre de Lanux, director of the Information Section's Paris office, also conducted long tours through the country organized by the LNA and the Carnegie Endowment.[50] Sweetser often briefed officials before their departure from Geneva. Updating Arthur Salter, former director of the Economic and Financial Section, on the situation of the League movement under the Roosevelt Presidency, Sweetser encouraged him to use his visit to "enlighten our good people a bit".[51]

American participation in interwar internationalism was also visible in the educational field.[52] As in other countries, the LNA saw younger audiences as a special target. The LNA started with this work in 1925, as board members noticed that there was a role to fulfil for the organization. Accordingly, its educational department compiled study outlines and educational programmes.

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45 Report on the year 1929/1930, 29–30, Archives of the Vereeniging voor Volkenbond en Vrede, International Institute for Social History, 24.

46 Daniel Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 187–94; Warren Frederick Kuehl and Lynne Kathleen Dunn, *Keeping the Covenant: American Internationalists and the League of Nations*, 1920–1939 (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1997).

47 Löhr and Herren, "Gipfeltreffen im Schatten der Weltpolitik", 417–23.

48 Katharina Rietzler, "Before the Cultural Cold Wars: American Philanthropy and Cultural Diplomacy in the Inter-War Years", *Historical Research* 84, no. 223 (2011): 148–64; Ludovic Tournès, "American Membership of the League of Nations: US Philanthropy and the Transformation of an Intergovernmental Organisation into a Think Tank", *International Politics* 55, no. 6 (2018): 852–69.

49 Report on Rachel Crowdy's visit to Canada and the United States, May–June 1926, 24, UNAG, R1600 40/49427/32866.

50 Pierre de Lanux took two leaves of absences in the US in 1928 and 1930, and returned for a year-long tour in 1933. Report on the activities of the Information Section's Paris Office, 14 April 1932, UNAG, R3437, 18A/34276/34276; "LNA Annual Report for 1933/1934, the League of Nations Association Collected Records", Swarthmore College Peace Collection [LNACR].

51 Letter from Sweetser to Arthur Salter, 4 April 1933, Public Policy Papers, Department of Special Collections, Princeton University Library, Box 17, File 3.

52 Laqua, "Activism in the 'Students' League of Nations": 628–9.

These programmes were created for youth organizations such as the YMCA, the YWCA and the American Association of University Women. In the first years, the department also distributed teacher manuals in all New York City schools.[53] In the late 1920s, the organization published *Round the World with the League of Nations*, a one-page newsletter with concise stories, sent to teachers and librarians.[54] From 1927, the LNA's educational department set out competitive examinations in collaboration with high schools and colleges. College students were asked to write an essay on themes such as disarmament, the mandate system and the "effectiveness of the League as the guarantor of the rights of minorities".[55] The LNA received more than 800 submissions for the first high school examination.[56] Historian Daniel Gorman describes how the LNA made the prize winner's trip to Geneva in 1929 into a publicity event of its own.[57] By 1928, 950 American schools participated, and the competition was held annually until April 1940.[58]

League officials supported the LNA's educational work, with the organization of Model League of Nations' Assemblies providing but one example. University students simulated the proceedings that took place in Geneva every September. The employees of the LNA's educational department did not organize these meetings themselves, but actively facilitated them. It sent out promotional flyers, lent out flags of all the member states and developed a 37-page outline, which included a seating plan and a guide on the League's official phraseology. The department encouraged high schools to organize "verbatim assemblies" in which students read pieces of actual speeches made by League delegates. The LNA claimed that in the 1929–30 school year, 5,300 students from all over the United States participated in 44 of these assemblies.[59] Various League officials touring the United States attended some of these model assembly meetings. Eric Drummond occasionally sent out a message of support to the assemblies from Geneva.[60] In a memorandum to the Secretary-General, Arthur Sweetser argued that the events were proof that "a tremendous but unseen education [on the League] is going on in colleges and universities".[61] While the Secretariat was not active in the United States, officials tried to support the educational work that was happening there.

Finally, it is worth reflecting on the League's educational work in Italy. The relationship between fascist Italy and the League's ICIC is discussed in greater depth in Benjamin Martin's contribution to this volume, but for the present chapter, it is noteworthy that members of the Information Section were active in this country as well. In the field of education, Italy took a leading role by organizing

53 LNA Annual Report for 1925, 3 and 16, LNACR, Box 1, Folder – 1925.

54 Some editions are available in LNACR, Box 6, Folder – newsletters.

55 Flyer for the LNA's First National Contest for Colleges, LNACR, Box 1, Folder – 1927.

56 Educational department outline of work 1927–1928, LNACR, Box 1, Folder – 1928.

57 Gorman, *The Emergence of International Society*, 192.

58 Flyer for the LNA's Fourteenth National Competitive Examination for High Schools, LNACR, Box 3, Folder – 1940.

59 Flyer on "Model Assemblies: What are they and how to give them", LNACR, Box 1, Folder – 1928; "An outline for a Model Assembly of the League of Nations", LNACR, Box 2, Folder – 1930.

60 Telegrams from Drummond to model assembly Presidents, 19 March 1929 and 14 February 1930, UNAG, R3308, 13/11401/11401.

61 Memorandum by Sweetser on work in the USA, 16 July 1930, UNOG, R3567, 50/21727/1683.

and funding the International Educational Cinematographic Institute. As historians Zoe Druick and Christel Taillibert argue, this Institute was both a tool to show goodwill towards the League and a way to compete with the IIIC in Paris.[62]

In the years before Mussolini's seizure of power, Italy was high on the priority list of the Information Section. Officials opened an office in Rome and employed influential individuals to lobby for the creation of a stronger League of Nations society.[63] After the fascist takeover, however, there was much less room for the Information Section to advocate on the League's behalf. As in India, officials in Rome were largely under the control of the government.[64] The Italian Information Section member in Geneva, Giuseppe Bruccoleri, travelled regularly to Italy. In 1928, Bruccoleri and the section's director, Comert, went to Cortina d'Ampezzo together, to attend the founding meeting of an Italian Student Society for the League of Nations. In a report on their travels, Comert showed that the strategy of the Information Section in Italy was the same as in other countries. Bruccoleri addressed an audience that was, in his eyes, poorly informed about the work of the League. His speech focused on rebuking their objections and misconceptions regarding the League. The Secretariat members handed out leaflets and publications to the Italian students.[65]

In this report on the situation in Italy, Comert showed how these student societies could help the work of the Section: "It is in our interest to remain in touch with the [Italian Student] Federation and its sections, in order to make it an instrument of publicity for the League amongst university students, not forgetting to use prudence and tact, which are the secrets to the success of our work."[66] In this quote, the director encapsulated the strategy of his Information Section. As in other countries, university students were important targets, as they were seen as the future elites of the member states. Comert did not specifically mention the fact that this was a fascist student society, probably in part because he knew that high-ranking Italian officials in Geneva would read his report. It is likely that he would – and could – make no special effort to address the frictions between the ideals of the fascist government, focused on preparing its youth to challenge the geopolitical status quo, and the League's aim to create mutual understanding between different nation-states. The fascist student movement for the League grew to 57 sections in Italian cities and towns, and, as with other parts of Italian civil society, was under control of the Italian state. In 1930, 40 of these sections gathered again to compete for scholarships to attend Zimmern's prestigious summer school in Geneva.[67] Groups of students would represent Italy at international conferences, as similar student League societies existed in other countries.[68] Historian Benedetta Garzarelli shows that tensions arose between different associations, as Italian student leaders unapologetically presented themselves as representing the fascist state.[69]

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62 Druick, "The International Educational Cinematograph Institute", 83; Taillibert, "Le cinéma d'éducation et le projet internationaliste de la SDN".

63 Van Dijk, "We Must Work with a Missionary Spirit", 129–33.

64 Tollardo, *Fascist Italy and the League*.

65 Pierre Comert, report for Eric Drummond on his trip to Cortina d'Ampezzo, 31 January 1928, LoNA R3297, 13/1355/896.

66 Ibid.

67 Report by Bruccoleri on the congress of the *Gruppi universitari italiani per la Società delle nazioni* in Perugia, 27–30 April 1930, 10 May 1930, UNAG, R3297, 13/19301/896.

68 Daniel Laqua, "Student Activists and International Cooperation in a Changing World, 1919–60", in *Internationalists in European History: Rethinking the Twentieth Century*, ed. David Brydan and Jessica Reinisch (London: Bloomsbury, 2021), 165.

69 Benedetta Garzarelli, "Universitari fascisti e rapporti con l'estero: le attività dei GUF in campo internazionale (1927–1939)", *Dimensioni e Problemi Della Ricerca Storica*, no. 2 (2000): 225–64.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown how officials of the Information Section cooperated with civil society actors to supplement the ICIC's work in the field of education. Where the ICIC and the IIIC fostered debates and the exchange of information, the Information Section supported activities in the educational field around the world. The case studies have shown that local circumstances were crucial in how ideas articulated in Geneva might be implemented. In India, the imperial government gave instructions to the local office, while in Italy the fascist government curtailed all Information Section activities. In the Netherlands and the United States, officials from the Section could cooperate closely with the local League societies, which had the position and resources to create educational activities. In these cases, as in the Geneva-based work, an elite-oriented strategy is visible. As with other activities, the Information Section hoped to target individuals that would promote the League on their behalf. While ideally, education would form a pro-League generation, officials particularly targeted elites in member states, hoping to create future statesmen that believed the League had a central role to play in maintaining a stable world order.

9

Transnational Associations and Intellectual Cooperation:

Anticipating, Lobbying, Serving and Complementing the League of Nations Institutions

Thomas Davies

The project of international intellectual cooperation following the First World War was one that League of Nations officials realised could not be accomplished through the efforts of the organization and governments alone. As the chief of the "general affairs" section of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC), British scholar Alfred Zimmern noted in a 1926 address to supportive transnational associations, League institutions were confined in their scope of action by their mandates from governments whereas transnational associations were freer to serve as "pioneers and pathfinders to go forward in their own way", given their non-state composition.[1]

This chapter explores four pathways by which transnational associations were able to advance intellectual cooperation in relation to the League of Nations in view of their independence: (i) anticipating the work of the League institutions; (ii) lobbying for the League to adopt certain policies; (iii) collaboration in the work of the League institutions; and (iv) complementing the work of the League in areas it served less comprehensively by undertaking their own intellectual cooperation initiatives. The following analysis considers each of these pathways in turn, providing examples and drawing on the archival resources of not only the League, but also private associations and individuals involved in intellectual cooperation between the two World Wars.

Anticipating the work of the League institutions

Over the course of the century prior to the League's establishment, the activities of multiple transnational associations may be considered to have constituted precursors to aspects of the League's work towards international intellectual cooperation. The writings of Marc-Antoine Jullien in the early nineteenth century have frequently been cited as having anticipated the idea of an international educational commission facilitating international learning with a view to overcoming the "baneful and contagious influence of national prejudices".[2] Less well-known is that Jullien established his own transnational associations aiming to advance such objectives through intellectual exchange

[1] Transcript of the second meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations, 28 January 1926, 1, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R1018/13/41815/48412.

[2] This quotation from Jullien's 1817 *Esquisse et vues préliminaires d'un ouvrage sur l'éducation comparée* appears in F. S. Northedge, "International Intellectual Co-operation within the League of Nations: Its Conceptual Basis and Lessons for the Present" (PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science, 1953), 227. See also Helmut Goetz, *Marc-Antoine Jullien de Paris (1775–1848): Der geistige Werdegang eines Revolutionärs: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Vorläufer internationaler Organisationen des 20. Jährhunderts* (Dornbirn: Hugo Mayer, 1954).

among the luminaries of the 1810s to 1830s.[3] While editing the *Revue Encyclopédique* from 1818 onwards, Jullien organized an accompanying learned society aiming to assemble "distinguished men of all nations" to support the journal's work in providing a "sort of institution to bring together the inhabitants of the different countries of the world through scientific and literary communication" and to "destroy the old prejudices and rivalries that separate peoples".[4] Following the July Revolution of 1830, this association was succeeded by the Société de l'Union des Nations (Society of the Union of Nations), which aimed "to eradicate national prejudices – and, by the frequent collision of intellect, to promote peace and good-will throughout the earth, by unitedly and mutually advancing the progress of civilization and improvement".[5] Similar goals in this period were pursued by associations such as the Société Universelle de Civilisation (Universal Society of Civilization).[6]

Transnational associations of the later nineteenth century sought to advance international intellectual cooperation through more functionally specialized means. Scientists in diverse fields established transnational disciplinary associations to exchange findings and facilitate cooperation, with more than one hundred such organizations being formed between 1870 and 1900.[7] By contrast, the International Literary and Artistic Association, founded in 1878, aimed not only towards developing "bonds of brotherhood" among "writers and artists of all countries" but the defence of their common interests, especially intellectual property.[8] The Universal Scientific Alliance had broader objectives – "to facilitate relations between the men of science distributed throughout all countries of the world"[9] – and pursued this goal through *présidences générales* in every continent and its "Diplôme Circulaire" to facilitate scientists' movement across borders.[10] At the elite level, the International Association of Academies brought together from 1899 the national scientific academies of ten European and North American countries in the belief that "the agreement between scientific men in the field of theoretical research often precedes a good understanding between peoples in the field of practice and business".[11] At the popular level, international correspondence clubs with grand names such as Internationalis Concordia and Kosmos aimed "to put men of different nationalities in touch with each other along the line of their special interests, be they intellectual, industrial, commercial, [or] recreational".[12]

Prior to the First World War, some of the most ambitious work towards international intellectual cooperation was advanced by the Brussels-based Union of International Associations (UIA), which besides its overarching aim towards "the systematic organisation of International Life in all its branches" sought to offer diverse services towards intellectual exchange such as an international

3 Thomas Davies, *NGOs: A New History of Transnational Civil Society* (London: Hurst, 2013), 29.

4 "Banquet mensuel de la Société de la *Revue Encyclopédique", Revue Encyclopédique* 36 (1827): 255.

5 Quoted in *The Crisis and National Co-Operative Trades' Union and Equitable Labour Exchange Gazette* 25, no. 3 (15 February 1834), 207.

6 M. de Moncey, ed., A*nnuaire de la civilisation, pour l'an 31831 de civilisation, et pour l'an 1831 de l'ère vulgaire* (Paris: Bachelier, 1831), 47.

7 Peter Alter, "The Royal Society and the International Association of Academies 1897–1919", N*otes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 34, no. 2 (1980): 241.

8 *Association littéraire et artistique internationale, son histoire, ses travaux, 1878–1889* (Paris: Chacornac, 1889), vii.

9 Union of International Associations, *Annuaire de la Vie Internationale 1908–1909* (Brussels: Office Central des Associations Internationales, 1909), 537.

10 Elisabeth Crawford, *Nationalism and Internationalism in Science, 1880–1939: Four Studies of the Nobel Population* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 39.

11 "The International Association of Academies", *Nature* 63, no. 1639 (1901): 519.

12 John Culbert Faries, *The Rise of Internationalism* (New York: W.D. Gray, 1915), 106.

library, encyclopaedic archives and a universal bibliographic catalogue.[13] During the First World War, one of its co-founders, Henri La Fontaine, advocated for the "international organization of education" including a "pedagogic center", an international university and "international protection of intellectual culture".[14] Immediately after the war, the UIA's other co-founder Paul Otlet published a pamphlet arguing for the establishment of an "intellectual league of nations" and opened a "World Palace" in Brussels in the hope that it would provide the location for this body. While this was not to be the case, Otlet and La Fontaine succeeded in pushing for the first League of Nations discussions on the subject of intellectual cooperation.[15]

The immediate roles of Otlet and La Fontaine in stimulating the work of the League of Nations on intellectual cooperation are well-acknowledged,[16] but less well-known are some of the earlier efforts to advance such cooperation through transnational associationalism during the First World War. One such effort was the Entente Committee of the UK's Royal Society of Literature (RSL), established in October 1916 with correspondents in allied countries including China, Italy, France, Japan, Russia and the USA.[17] Its official aims encompassed steps towards "increasing the intellectual intercourse among those nations upon whom depends the shaping of the path of human progress after the present struggle".[18] The RSL's vice-president Henry Newbolt saw the committee's purpose as facilitating "the reeducation of Europe in […] principles of humanity" and to "make every nation an element in the culture of every other nation".[19] In practice, the committee's work included exchange of publications, liaison among correspondents of literary institutions across allied countries, and the drafting of "principles of public and international morality" in order to "refound the education of the world on a basis of ideals".[20] In 1918, Francis Younghusband presented a paper to the committee anticipating that "the intellectual entente we now desire to promote may develop into an intellectual union of nations".[21] However, the committee was dealt a substantial blow following the withdrawal of funding from the UK's Ministry of Information after the war; it was perceived that the work of the League of Nations would have the potential to facilitate international intellectual cooperation more effectively.[22] The entente committee was always limited by its inter-allied rather than wider reach, as well as by its dependency on a single government's support – two problems which a turn to the League of Nations was hoped to avoid.

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13 Union of International Associations, *Union of International Associations: A World Center* (Brussels: Office Central des Associations Internationales, 1914), 7. For a survey of the UIA's history, see Daniel Laqua, Wouter Van Acker, and Christophe Verbruggen, eds, *International Organizations and Global Civil Society: Histories of the Union of International Associations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).

14 Henri La Fontaine, *The Great Solution: Magnissima Charta* (Boston: World Peace Foundation, 1916), 79.

15 Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", J*ournal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 227.

16 Jean Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle, 1919–1946* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999), 11–19.

17 "Committee for Promoting an Intellectual Entente among the Allied and Friendly Countries", *Report of the Royal Society of Literature*, 1917 (London: Royal Society of Literature, 1917), 18–23.

18 Ibid., 23.

19 Henry Newbolt, "Anniversary Address 1917", *Report of the Royal Society of Literature, 1917* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1917), 59.

20 "Entente Committee February 18th 1917. Communication from Sir Henry Newbolt", MS RSL C2/1, Archives of the Royal Society of Literature, Cambridge University Library; Henry Newbolt, "Anniversary Address, 1919", *Report of the Royal Society of Literature, 1919* (London: Royal Society of Literature, 1919), 63.

21 Quoted in William C. Lubenow, *"Only Connect": Learned Societies in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015), 263.

22 R. W. Needham to Henry Newbolt, 23 August 1918, MS RSL EF Newbolt, Archives of the Royal Society of Literature; Lubenow, *"Only Connect"*, 264.

Lobbying the League of Nations

While we have seen how diverse functions that were to be served by League of Nations institutions were anticipated among an array of transnational associations over the preceding century, the different bodies of the League of Nations offered new opportunities for transnational advocacy after 1918. The previous section underlined the role of the UIA's founders in putting intellectual cooperation on the League agenda. They were not alone: as early as December 1919, the International Federation of League of Nations Societies passed a resolution urging the League of Nations to "encourage and direct" international scientific and educational endeavours, and the following year the Federation's French member association wrote to the Secretary-General of the League Eric Drummond, requesting the establishment of an international intellectual bureau analogous to the International Labour Office.[23]

In the period leading to the establishment of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) in 1921–22, Drummond produced a report presenting the prior history of such work exclusively with reference to the activities of the UIA.[24] Subsequently, however, it was other transnational associations that were often to be more prominent in lobbying the League in respect of its work for intellectual cooperation, with Paris instead of Brussels selected as the location for the IIIC when it was launched in 1926. The founding director of the IIIC was Julien Luchaire, the author of the plans for the establishment of an "Office for Intellectual Intercourse and Education" that were set out in the request of the French Association for the League of Nations to Drummond in July 1920.[25]

In his early study of the ICIC, F. S. Northedge observed that it "lacked the backing of organised pressures and powerful trade associations which assured the success of the Labour Organisation".[26] Nevertheless, the array of transnational associations that sought to influence the work of the Committee and Institute was extensive. At the second meeting of the ICIC in August 1922, a lengthy memorandum was circulated, summarizing the diverse communications received from transnational associations. The proposals varied from general plans for international organization of intellectual, scientific and inter-university cooperation, through to more limited objectives centred on educational and publication exchange. The submitting groups included the UIA, the International Federation of University Women, the International Confederation of Students, the Institute of International Education, the World Association for Adult Education, the International Bureau of National Associations of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools and various League of Nations societies.[27]

Among the most prolific in its demands was the International Federation of League of Nations Societies which by June 1922 had already called for a "technical organization for education and science", an "International Education Bureau" and "two textbooks dealing with international collaboration and the League of Nations, for the use of children under twelve years of age, and from

[23] Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 13–14.

[24] Eric Drummond, "L'activité éducative et l'organisation du travail intellectuel accomplies par l'Union des Associations Internationales", 23 August 1921, UNAG, C-267-1921_FR.

[25] *League of Nations Official Journal* 8, October 1920, 445–51.

[26] Northedge, "International Intellectual Co-operation", 118.

[27] "Rapport du Secrétariat sur les propositions qui lui ont été soumises en matière intellectuelle par diverses organisations et personnalités", 29 July 1922, UNAG, R1031/13/22167/14297.

twelve to sixteen years of age".[28] This latter objective of textbook development and revision was one of the most popular themes that transnational associations advocated when lobbying the ICIC: by July 1922, further proposals that reached the ICIC ranged from the organizational (such as a "committee on the critical examination of textbooks") to the functional (such as statements of League of Nations ideals for insertion in textbooks).[29] The ICIC's response, however, was lukewarm. In 1925, it adopted a limited proposal by Julio Casares for mutual liaison among National Committees for Intellectual Cooperation to suggest corrections of errors in each other's textbooks on the basis that it was "useless to try to impose any particular textbook on countries or even to recommend its adoption", further claiming that it was "premature to attempt the teaching of any subject, and especially of history, from an international point of view".[30] Later efforts to produce an international textbook of world history – including at a League-organized congress on history teaching held in the Hague in 1932 – were to be similarly dismissed by the ICIC.[31]

Greater success was achieved in less contentious areas of intellectual and educational exchange, another popular subject in the petitions received from transnational associations in the first year of the ICIC's work, including multiple requests for the co-ordination of international student exchanges.[32] This was to materialize the subsequent year, with the ICIC resolving in 1923 to bring together international students' associations to coordinate exchange activities.[33] Concrete outcomes of this process included the development of the International Student Identity Card, proposed by the International Confederation of Students to the ICIC in 1923 and launched in 1926.[34] By 1928, the student organization noted that the card was being issued in 17 countries, and that this was "due to the kindly interest and support of the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations, to which the students of the world are duly grateful".[35] Daniel Laqua has argued that the card represents "an example of successful co-operation", involving the International Confederation of Students as well as "other student organisations, and the League".[36]

Collaboration on student exchanges was not the only example of successful petitioning of the League's intellectual cooperation infrastructure. For instance, the 1930 appeal of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies for an international conference on educational problems was taken forward in a series of higher education conferences from 1932.[37] However, limited financial resources proved to be a frequent obstacle to achieving some of the more ambitious goals pressed upon the ICIC by transnational associations, including the frequently-requested establishment of

28 "Rapport du Secrétariat sur les propositions", Section vi.

29 Ibid., Section iii.

30 ICIC, *Minutes of the Sixth Session* (Geneva: ICIC, 1925), 14–15, UNAG. On the intersection between debates about history teaching, textbooks and the specific remit of the League's bodies for intellectual cooperation in the early 1930s, see Xavier Riondet's chapter in this volume.

31 Ken Osborne, "Creating the 'International Mind': The League of Nations Attempts to Reform History Teaching, 1920–1939", *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2016): 226.

32 "Rapport du Secrétariat sur les propositions", Section ii.

33 ICIC, *Minutes of the Second Session* (Geneva: ICIC, 1923), 32.

34 "Réponse au questionnaire de la commission de Coopération Intellectuelle de la Société des Nations concernant les échanges d'étudiants", September 1923, UNAG, R1055/13C/28306/28307.

35 "Report on the Identity Card", April 1928, UNAG, R2202/5B/3738/423.

36 Daniel Laqua, "Activism in the 'Students' League of Nations': International Student Politics and the *Confédération Internationale des Étudiants*, 1919–1939", *The English Historical Review* 132, no. 556 (2017): 625.

37 Northedge, "International Intellectual Co-operation", 458–60.

an international university based on League principles. The university proposal was considered both likely to find that "the financial obstacle will prove insurmountable" as well as a superfluous endeavour given established universities' pre-existing interest in international peace and cooperation.[38] In other cases, the objectives submitted to the League's intellectual cooperation institutions were unviable given the limitations of an international order based on principles of state sovereignty: among the most notable proposals to fail at this hurdle was the UIA's campaign for special international legal status for transnational associations, an issue which was handed to the IIIC to address through a survey. While the survey revealed considerable demand among transnational associations for international legal status, the IIIC was in no position to bring this idea into fruition.[39]

Collaboration in the work of the League institutions

One of the most remarkable features of the relationship between the League's institutions for intellectual cooperation and private international associations concerned with this domain of activity was the extent to which the latter sought to collaborate in the work of the former. In the initial batch of petitions considered by the ICIC in 1922, several transnational associations either requested its patronage (for instance in the case of the International Confederation of Students) or offered their assistance (as in the case of the International Research Council, the Union Académique Internationale, the International Federation of University Women and the International Bureau of National Associations of Teachers in Public Secondary Schools).

In practice, the IIIC was to establish diverse means of cooperation with transnational associations. Its 1931 programme and methods provided detailed arrangements for liaison with these associations, dividing them up into general and specialized organizations in a manner anticipating the later division of categories of organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. These provisions also provided both for the delegation of tasks to transnational associations, as well as for the co-optation of their members in IIIC expert committees.[40] As with the wider League of Nations, the IIIC observed transnational associations' meetings in areas of its interest, and the IIIC also provided meeting facilities – although the extent to which these were possible was limited by budgetary constraints, and (especially into the 1930s) political considerations.[41] The tasks delegated by the ICIC and IIIC to transnational associations included data collection, publications and the coordination of work in areas of common interest, notably in respect of student exchanges as discussed earlier.[42]

The extent to which tasks were successfully delegated to transnational associations depended significantly on the latter's competence. Compilation of the first *List of International Unions* circulated by the League of Nations Secretariat in 1919 was made possible by drawing on data supplied by Otlet and La Fontaine of the UIA, who had assembled the comprehensive *Annuaires de*

[38] "A proposal for the establishment of an International University, Under the Auspices of the League of Nations", observations of Prof. D. N. Bannerjea, 22 May 1923, UNAG, R1056/13C/28370/28370. On wider debates about an "international university" in this period, see Daniel Laqua, "Educating Internationalists: The Context, Role and Legacies of the UIA's 'International University'", in Laqua, van Acker and Verbruggen, *International Organizations and Global Civil Society*, 53–72.

[39] IIIC, *L'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1925–1946* (Paris: Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1949), 523–5.

[40] Ibid., 47–8.

[41] Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 275–80.

[42] IIIC, *L'Institut International*, 123–4, 157 and 163; Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, 206.

la Vie Internationale prior to the First World War, and this collaboration laid the foundation for the series of *Handbooks of International Organisations* published by the League from 1922 until 1938.[43] On the other hand, delegation by the ICIC of compilation of the *Index Bibliographicus* to another one of Otlet and La Fontaine's associations – the International Institute of Bibliography – was to prove disastrous, with the Institute unable to achieve the confidence of national bibliographical authorities and the first supplement of 1925 having to be withdrawn from circulation due to its numerous errors.[44]

The League's efforts to collaborate with transnational scientific associations also met with variable success. The International Research Council and its successor, the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU), were sceptical that the League could offer more than they were already able to perform themselves, and it was not until 1937 that the IIIC and the ICSU signed an agreement that the latter could serve as an official consultative organ of the former and by which each organization could send representatives to one another's meetings.[45] The IIIC also conducted joint investigations with member organizations of the ICSU, for instance collaborating with the International Union of Biological Science on the stabilization of auxin.[46]

More impactful was the IIIC's work to cooperate with transnational associations in the advancement of the study of international relations (IR), which unlike other fields was in the early stages of its disciplinary development. Jan Stöckmann has argued that the International Studies Conference (ISC), which the IIIC organized, "turned into the most important annual meeting for professors, diplomats, politicians, philanthropists, and journalists who engaged in some way with the study of IR".[47] Organization of the ISC required the cooperation not only of research institutes such as Chatham House and university bodies such as the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, but transnational foundations such as the Carnegie Endowment, with the director of its European Centre serving as the ISC Bureau President.[48]

Possibly the most ambitious effort towards collaboration between the IIIC and transnational associations was the establishment of the Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations in December 1925. At its inaugural meeting, Luchaire described its origins in a League of Nations Assembly resolution calling for the preparation "for peace in people's souls through education", but he also attributed this to being a response to the appeals of transnational associations.[49] The Co-ordinating Committee aimed to enable among its participating transnational

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43 "List of International Unions, Associations, Institutions, Commissions, Bureaux, &c.", 4 November 1919, UNAG, R1004/13/1434/299.

44 The lack of confidence in the Institute is reported in J. E. de Vos van Steenwijk, "Report of Mr. de Vos van Steenwijk on the Brussels Institute of Bibliography", 3 November 1926, UNAG, R1066/13C/44162/32725. On the fraught relationship between the League of Nations institutions and Otlet and La Fontaine in respect of their collaboration on publications, see Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018), 128–9, 135–6, 177–80, 263–5.

45 Frank Greenaway, *Science International: A History of the International Council of Scientific Unions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 38; the text of the agreement is provided in IIIC, *L'Institut International*, 354–5.

46 IIIC, *L'Institut International*, 362–3.

47 Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 186.

48 IIIC, *L'Institut International*, 330.

49 Transcript of the first meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations, 10 December 1925, 1–2, UNAG, R1018/13/41815/48412.

associations "exchanges of views, facilitation of joint studies, and the finding of practical means of implementing" their goals, which included textbook revision, liaison with teachers and summer schools – much of which would need governments' cooperation to work effectively.[50] In recognition of this, Drummond suggested that the group should consist not only of transnational associations but also national educational officials, however IIIC deputy-director Alfred Zimmern ruled this out on the basis that "as prophets and statesmen respectively they could not act together".[51]

The Co-ordinating Committee aimed to facilitate collaboration with the IIIC of not just educational organizations but a wider array of major transnational associations, including the International Council of Women, the International Alliance of Women, the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, Pax Romana, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the International Conference of Disabled Ex-Servicemen, the League of Red Cross Societies and Save the Children International Union.[52] However, efforts to establish parallel national committees of national associations failed to materialize and in 1938 A.-M. Gossart lamented to colleagues that

> It appears that, too often, the work carried on amongst the international organisations has not enough bearing on that of the national sections and their members […] The danger of carrying on certain work in a set direction without having any real support from the individual constitutive elements of public opinion, has not escaped your notice.[53]

One of the principal problems confronting the Co-ordinating Committee was the ineffectual leadership of André Waltz, of whom Gabrielle Radziwill of the League Secretariat noted that at its first meeting he "evidently knew neither the work the organizations are doing, nor the delegates they had sent".[54] However, scarce resources also limited the Co-ordinating Committee's impact: while the IIIC could offer staff and offices, funds for the Co-ordinating Committee's activities generally needed to come from the participating transnational associations, which tended themselves to have barely enough means to cover their own core activities let alone those of the Co-ordinating Committee.[55] The Co-ordinating Committee's achievements were therefore extremely limited, although it claimed progress in relation to promoting textbook revision, disseminating publicity for League aims and activities, and the issuing of reports on special topics such as children's literature, the role of cinema in peace education, and the problem of unemployment among literary workers.[56]

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50 First annual report of the Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations to the IIIC, May 1926, 1, UNESCO Archives, File B.IV.39, Box 73.

51 Note by Eric Drummond, 18 December 1925; transcript of the second meeting of the Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations, 28 January 1926, 1, UNAG, R1018/13/41815/48412.

52 A list of participating associations was provided in Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations, *Le Comité d'Entente des Grandes Associations Internationales: Dix Années d'Activité* (Paris: Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations, 1936), 21–3.

53 Letter of 24 November 1928, UNAG, R4054/5C/1175/699.

54 Gabrielle Radziwill, "Meeting of the international organisations working in favour of peace education through the schools", 16 December 1925, 2, UNAG, R1018/13/41815/48412.

55 Some of the Co-ordinating Committee's more ambitious efforts such as the proposed international magazine A–Z: *The International Link of Youth* were therefore not to get off the ground – UNAG, R2262/5C/583/300.

56 An overview is offered in Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations, *Le Comité d'Entente des Grandes Associations Internationales*, 28–42. See also Elly Hermon, "Le Comité d'entente des grandes associations internationales: un chapitre de l'histoire du mouvement transnational d'éducation pour la paix et la coopération intellectuelle internationale", *Associations Transnationales 2* (1987): 68–78.

Just as dependency on ephemeral government support had stymied the work of the earlier Entente Committee, dependence on scarce IIIC resources limited the effectiveness of the Co-ordinating Committee.

Complementing the work of the League institutions

Given the limitations of efforts to collaborate with the League, consideration should also be made of the activities undertaken by transnational associations independently, yet in sympathy, with the League's aims in intellectual cooperation. In some cases, transnational associations undertook their own initiatives paralleling those of the IIIC – for instance, the inter-Scandinavian association Norden put together its own textbook examination commission to identify inaccuracies and partiality in school history textbooks and made recommendations to their authors for revisions, which the IIIC claimed were "warmly received and led to satisfactory results".[57]

The activities of transnational associations to promote moral disarmament were among some of the most extensive in paralleling, or in several cases even exceeding, the League's own endeavours. A diverse array of transnational associations set up their own summer schools with a view to education in international understanding, including the UIA and the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, as well as internationally-oriented national associations such as the British League of Nations Union, the League of Nations Association of Japan and the Association de la Paix par le Droit (Association for Peace through Law) in France.[58] Associations including the International Federation of League of Nations Societies and the League of Nations Union also provided teacher training in world citizenship. Moreover, as further discussed in Pelle van Dijk's contribution to this book, the League of Nations Union pioneered model League of Nations assemblies from 1921 – a widely emulated forerunner of the Model United Nations movement.[59]

As a case study of how a transnational association could extend the work of intellectual cooperation in ways beyond the reach of League institutions, we can turn to the transnational association of writers, International PEN (known since 2010 as PEN International). Despite its modest origins in 1921 as an "international dinner club" for "men and women of repute […] PPEN (Poet, Playwright, Editor, Novelist) people", its founder English writer Amy Dawson Scott intended wider aims from the outset, hoping it would provide "a common meeting ground in every country for all writers" and "draw the nations together – United States of Europe and America in literature", forging connections between literary figures "without being under any obligation to anybody" and funded by members' subscriptions.[60] Its first president John Galsworthy, author of the *Forsyte Saga*, saw in the voluntary formation of PEN clubs around the world a means towards advancing through transnational cooperation among writers "international understanding and peace" – and within three years it boasted 18 international centres.[61]

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57 IIIC, *L'Institut International*, 196.

58 See Thomas Davies, "Internationalism in a Divided World: The Experience of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies, 1919–1939", *Peace and Change: A Journal of Peace Research* 37, no. 2 (2012): 227–52.

59 See also Mark J. Mullenbach, "A History of Model League of Nations in the United States", as featured in Mullenbach's *History of the Arkansas Model United Nations since 1966* (Conway, AR: Arkansas Model United Nations / University of Arkansas, 2024) and available at https://uca.edu/politicalscience/files/2017/12/AMUN-Chapter-1.pdf (last accessed 24 February 2025).

60 All quotations are from Amy Dawson Scott's correspondence of July–September 1921, in Marjorie Watts, *P.E.N: The Early Years, 1921–1926* (London: Archive, 1971), 11–13.

61 The quotation is from Galsworthy's letter of acceptance to PEN's first London meeting in 1921, in Watts, *P.E.N.*, 14.

International PEN occasionally lobbied the League of Nations, for instance campaigning unsuccessfully for a "League of Nations prize for literature" which, like so many other intellectual cooperation initiatives proposed to the League of Nations, was rejected on the basis of lack of funds.[62] By contrast, International PEN was relatively well-resourced and unlike the Co-ordinating Committee was able to issue regular periodical publications. Moreover, despite cooperating in several areas of League work such as translation and challenging censorship, International PEN – like the ICSU – was cautious about cooperation with the ICIC, with its Council affirming in 1925 that "it would be wiser to remain quite free".[63]

Early on, PEN's leadership considered that its non-governmental composition enabled it to pioneer intellectual cooperation in domains beyond the reach of the League of Nations. Galsworthy argued that whereas "governments are competitive trustees for competitive sections of mankind" the "exchange of international thought" through bodies such as PEN could offer the potential means by which "we might hear the rustle of salvation's wings" – he further argued that at PEN "we stand for keeping literature outside politics, as one of the few, perhaps the one disinterested link between peoples".[64] On account of its separation from interstate tensions, International PEN could advance intellectual cooperation in contexts beyond the League's reach, for instance organizing its fourth international congress in 1926 in Berlin – in Dawson Scott's view "the first time since the war that there had been an international gathering of any sort in Berlin", advancing intellectual cooperation where the League could not.[65] Some PEN events could, however, take place in close proximity to the League's intellectual cooperation work: for instance, as Leandro Lacquaniti's chapter in this volume shows, in September 1936, an International PEN congress and IIIC *Entretien* took place in Buenos Aires in quick succession and with overlapping participation.

International PEN's non-state composition enabled it to take a much stronger stand on issues of freedom of expression. Its 1931 Appeal to All Governments urged respect of rights of prisoners of conscience and invoked "the conscience of the world", anticipating the founding aims of Amnesty International by thirty years.[66] Under the stewardship of H. G. Wells from 1933, International PEN became increasingly outspoken on this issue, expelling the Nazi German branch and establishing émigré centres including German PEN-in-exile in London in 1934.[67] Its letter-writing initiatives in relation to individual prisoners of conscience – including its campaign leading to the release of Arthur Koestler from Spanish prison in 1937 – further anticipated the later better-known human rights work of Amnesty International.[68] Long outlasting the work towards intellectual cooperation of the League of Nations institutions, International PEN was later to consider itself "the true UNESCO of peoples and of individuals" in place of "governments and civil servants".[69]

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62 Letter from Jean-Daniel de Montenach to Hermon Ould, 9 January 1932, UNAG, R2216/5B/40197/78.

63 Quoted in Carles Torner and Jan Martens, eds, *PEN International: An Illustrated History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2021), 22.

64 John Galsworthy, *International Thought* (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons, 1923), 4 and 7; John Galsworthy to Thomas Hardy, 20 January 1923, H.2563, TH.Lt.7, Thomas Hardy Papers, Dorset History Centre, Dorchester.

65 Quoted in Watts, *P.E.N.*, 33.

66 Rachel Potter, "Literature Knows No Frontiers: Modernism and Free Speech", in *Moving Modernisms: Motion, Technology, and Modernity*, ed. David Bradshaw, Laura Marcus and Rebecca Roach (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2016), 159–74.

67 Megan Doherty, "PEN International and its Republic of Letters, 1921–1970" (PhD thesis, Columbia University, 2011), 135 and 148.

68 Torner and Martens, *PEN International*, 52–4.

69 Alexandre Blokh, quoted in Torner and Martens, *PEN International*, 62.

Conclusion

Transnational associations both long anticipated much of the work towards intellectual cooperation of the League of Nations and played a significant role in campaigning for the establishment of the institutions of the League dedicated to this field of activity. Once operational, the ICIC and IIIC were frequently lobbied by transnational associations for the extension of their work, and although achievements in contentious subjects such as textbook revision were limited, the results were more impressive in areas more amenable to cooperation such as the facilitation of student exchanges.

Many transnational associations were keen to collaborate with the League of Nations on intellectual cooperation, and in domains such as the advancement of the discipline of international relations the impact was substantial. Further-reaching efforts towards collaboration between the League institutions and transnational associations such as the Co-ordinating Committee of Major International Associations were limited by scarcity of resources and the constraints of the League institutions' mandates.

In view of these limitations, some of the most impressive efforts towards international intellectual cooperation between the two World Wars were undertaken by transnational associations entirely outside the League institutions: this was especially the case in more contentious subjects such as campaigning for the release of prisoners of conscience in respect of which International PEN pioneered forms of transnational human rights activism that were to become a prominent feature of later twentieth century world politics.

Part C

External Relations

10

The Trauma of Imperial Decline versus the Triumph of National Rebirth:

Austria's and Poland's Contrasting Concepts of International Intellectual Cooperation after the First World War

Johannes Feichtinger

In 1922, against the backdrop of manifold challenges faced by scholarly and scientific endeavours across Central Europe, the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) was established to advise the League of Nations on how one might best assist intellectual exchange and foster international cooperation.[1] With the backing of the League Council, the ICIC emerged as a mediator between the League, the member states and a range of newly formed nation-based sub-organizations promoting intellectual cooperation. The twelve ICIC members were eminent academics who mainly came from Western Europe. Having ascertained that the status of scholarly and scientific endeavours was exceptionally precarious in Central Europe, the committee initially focused primarily on this region. In November 1922, the ICIC launched an urgent international appeal for donations of scholarly literature to benefit academic libraries in Austria.[2] In the course of 1922–23, the committee surveyed the conditions in thirteen Central and East European countries, many of them successor states to the dissolved German, Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, and encouraged the formation of national committees to garner the support of the respective governments. While both Austria and Poland exerted considerable influence on the ICIC's initial policies, they came to the table with quite distinct expectations, and the hopes of the Austrian National Committee for substantial financial assistance were soon dashed, leaving it bitterly disappointed.[3]

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1 For a brief overview of the ICIC, see Martin Grandjean, "The International Bureaux and Intellectual Cooperation Section", *About the League of Nations Secretariat Resource Guide*, available at https://libraryresources.unog.ch/LONSecretariat/intellectual (last accessed 15 July 2024). For a general introduction, see also Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 223–47. I would like to thank Lars Fischer, Berlin, for his careful and constructive editing of the manuscript.

2 Tomás Irish, *Feeding the Mind: Humanitarianism and the Reconstruction of European Intellectual Life, 1919–1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 99.

3 Johannes Feichtinger, "On the Fraught Internationalism of Intellectuals: Alfons Dopsch, Austria and the League's Intellectual Cooperation Programme", in *Remaking Central Europe: The League of Nations and the Former Habsburg Lands*, ed. Peter Becker and Natasha Wheatley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 167–90; Andrzej M. Brzeziński, "Oskar Halecki – the Advocate of Central and Eastern European Countries in the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1925)", *Studia z Dziejów Rosji i Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej* [Studies in the History of Russia and Central and Eastern Europe] 48 (2013): 5–19, 12; Andrzej M. Brzeziński, "Sprawy polskie w działalności Oskara Haleckiego – sekretarza Komisji Międzynarodowej Współpracy Intelektualnej Ligi Narodów (1922–1924)" [Polish Issues in the Activity of Oskar Halecki as a Secretary of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations], in *Oskar Halecki i jego wizja Europy* [Oskar Halecki and His Vision of Europe], vol. 1, ed. Małgorzata Dąbrowska (Warsaw and Łódź: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2012), 38–55; Andrzej M. Brzeziński, *Oskar Halecki a Liga Narodów. Poglądy i działalność* [Oskar Halecki and the League of Nations: Views and Activities] (Łódź: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego), 2016.

In examining Central European participation in the League's attempts to foster intellectual cooperation, this chapter focuses specifically on the roles played by the leading Polish and Austrian protagonists: Oskar Halecki (1891–1973), a polyglot historian based at the University of Warsaw, who served as the ICIC's inaugural secretary; and Alfons Dopsch (1868–1953), a widely-respected historian and former vice chancellor (*Rektor*) of the University of Vienna. Both have been portrayed as internationalists-turned-nationalists, staunch Catholic conservatives and anti-communists, tasked not least with ensuring that assistance did not benefit the "wrong" kinds of intellectual endeavours.[4] Yet, these similarities notwithstanding, when it came to the work of the ICIC, their priorities diverged quite considerably.

The chapter suggests that this divergence resulted from their distinct national perspectives. While Dopsch was motivated by a desperate desire to preserve the proud academic and scientific legacy of the now defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire, Halecki was deeply impressed by the extent to which the enthusiasm of national regeneration, notably in the successor states, also generated increased scholarly and scientific activity and promised a comprehensive renewal of the European intellectual landscape as a whole.

Beginnings and the provisonal reports on Austria and Poland

At their inaugural session in August 1922, ICIC members agreed on the need to ascertain what the most urgent needs in the cultural and academic realm actually were. They therefore called on the League Council to initiate "a general enquiry into the conditions of intellectual life in the various countries" with a view to establishing "measures for bringing immediate assistance to the nations where intellectual life was threatened with imminent disaster".[5] It was clear from the outset that conditions were worst in the countries "established on the ruins of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and of the Russian Empire". Austria and Poland were singled out as being most likely to need immediate assistance.[6] Two committee members had the responsibility to prepare surveys of these two countries for the League Council: Gonzague de Reynold, a Swiss professor of French literature, was asked to prepare a provisional study of the state of play in Austria, and Marie Skłodowska-Curie, the Nobel laureate in physics and chemistry, took on the Polish survey.[7] Both submitted their reports promptly, and the League Council was able to discuss them at its meetings on 23 September and 4 October 1922. The two reports differed dramatically in tone and thrust: de Reynold told a story of intellectual decline, Marie Curie a story of considerable progress.

4 See e.g. Cormac Shine, "Papal Diplomacy by Proxy? Catholic Internationalism at the League of Nations' International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, 1922–1939", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 69, no. 4 (2018): 785–805, 795–6; Thomas Buchner, "Alfons Dopsch (1868–1953): Die 'Mannigfaltigkeit der Verhältnisse'", in *Österreichische Historiker: Lebensläufe und Karrieren 1900–1945*, ed. Karel Hruza (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2008), 155–90.

5 ICIC, Minutes of the First Session, Geneva, 1–5 August 1922 (11 October 1922), 8, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), C-711-M-423-1922-XII.

6 Ibid., 9.

7 Ibid., 11.

According to de Reynold, intellectual life in Austria – once the "most fully developed" in Europe – had come to a complete standstill in the "unfortunate country" that it now was: teaching at the universities was reduced to a minimum and the publications of the Academy of Sciences, until recently "one of the most famous and most active in the world", had ceased altogether. The social impact of the political revolution of 1918 had turned intellectuals into "a proletariat at a lower level than the worker". The League Council urgently needed to act since "Europe certainly cannot afford, without running serious risks, to see one of the main centres of its intellectual life and of its culture fall into decay".[8]

De Reynold was the first to stress just how urgently Austria needed financial support simply in order to survive, never mind restore and maintain its academic infrastructure. The economic situation of the young republic was catastrophic. From 1918 to 1923, it was plagued by famine, coal shortages and rampant inflation.[9] In exchange for international loans, the Austrian government agreed to hand over its financial affairs to a commissioner-general appointed by the League of Nations, which enforced the rigorous fiscal discipline set out in the Geneva Protocol.[10] Austrian universities, museums, public collections, libraries and archives suffered massive reductions in human and material resources as some 50,000 civil servants were made redundant.[11] Inflation led to consistent real-term cuts in public budgets, the income of private foundations and the salaries of the remaining academic staff.[12]

This dire state of affairs drew considerable international attention, and a measure of financial assistance was soon forthcoming.[13] These initiatives included the subsidizing of academics' salaries by the Emergency Society for German and Austrian Science and Art, a foundation established on the initiative of the prominent anthropologist Franz Boas.[14] Margaret Stonborough-Wittgenstein provided generous funding to allow the Academy of Sciences to resume its publications programme.[15] Given that the post-war settlement strictly ruled out any form of union between Germany and

8 "Report on the Condition of Intellectual Life in Austria, approved by the Council on 13 September 1922 (M. de Reynold, Rapporteur of the Committee)", 24 August 1922, UNAG, A-62-1922-XII_BI.

9 See John W. Boyer, *Austria, 1867–1955* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 610–11, 677–8.

10 See Nathan Marcus, "Austria, the League of Nations, and the Birth of Multilateral Financial Control", in Becker and Wheatley, *Remaking Central Europe*, 127–44.

11 Patricia Clavin, "The Austrian Hunger Crisis and the Genesis of International Organization after the First World War", *International Affairs* 90, no. 2 (2014): 265–78, 276–7.

12 See Mitchell G. Ash, "Die Universität Wien in den politischen Umbrüchen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts", in *Universität – Politik – Gesellschaft*, ed. Mitchell G. Ash and Josef Ehmer (Göttingen: V & R Vienna University Press, 2015), 29–172, 69–72.

13 Irish, *Feeding the Mind*, 52–8.

14 See Brooke Penaloza-Patzak, "Die Emergency Society for German and Austrian Science and Art, 1920–1927: Eine Einführung in eine beinahe unbekannte Hilfsorganisation und der Mehrwert ihrer Forschung", in *Wandlungen und Brüche: Wissenschaftsgeschichte als politische Geschichte*, ed. Johannes Feichtinger, Marianne Klemun, Jan Surman and Petra Svatek (Göttingen: V&R Vienna University Press, 2018), 127–34.

15 See Johannes Mattes, Doris A. Corradini, Sandra Klos, and Brigitte Mazohl, "Umbrüche und Kontinuitäten: Die Akademie in der Zwischenkriegszeit", in *Die Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1847–2022: Eine neue Akademiegeschichte*, ed. Johannes Feichtinger and Brigitte Mazohl (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2022), 521–608, 541–52. Stonborough-Wittgenstein was the youngest daughter of the steel magnate Karl Wittgenstein and (thus) the youngest sister of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (and the pianist Paul Wittgenstein). She was married to Jerome Stonborough, the son of a wealthy New York-based industrialist. He trained as a scientist and was widely known as a collector of art and music autographs.

Austria, the promotion of Austrian research by German agencies was a matter of considerable sensitivity, but the German Kaiser Wilhelm Society, drawing principally on funds provided by the German government, also helped fund some research in Austria.[16]

While de Reynold stressed the urgency of direct financial assistance, Curie, in her "Provisional Memorandum on the Condition of Intellectual Life in Poland", placed the emphasis elsewhere.[17] She identified two principal challenges faced by Poland in its capacity as "a very ancient centre of European civilisation".[18] Not only did the re-established Polish state face the repercussions of the First World War and the two-year war against Soviet Russia, it also needed to grapple with "the abnormal and extremely unfavourable conditions" created by the country's centuries-long partition.[19] Russia and Prussia had closed the Polish universities in the parts of the country they ruled, and only the Habsburg government had eventually allowed the universities in Galicia to "reassume their Polish character".[20] Important advances had been initiated even during the war: instruction in Polish was permitted at the university and polytechnic in Warsaw, the ground work for the creation of a Polish Ministry of Education was laid, and a new private Polish university was established in Lublin. In 1919, new universities were created in the formerly Prussian and Russian cities of Poznań and Wilno (Vilnius), respectively.[21] By 1920, 26 new academic associations and institutes had been inaugurated, nine of them by the new Polish state. Student numbers rose rapidly, from 24,000 in 1921 to 32,000 the following year. Curie estimated that the number would need to stabilize at roughly 60,000 to meet "the intellectual requirements of the Polish nation".[22] All in all, Curie was confident that "the entire reconstruction of intellectual life" in Poland was well underway.[23]

For all these achievements, Curie did point to two major shortcomings: there was a lack of qualified staff to teach the growing number of students, and the requisite teaching resources were scarce. Given the extent to which scholarship and science had been neglected prior to the restoration of the Polish state, the holdings of academic libraries were deficient and research laboratories were in urgent need of up-to-date equipment and improved access to the full range of chemical agents. Academic life and scientific research in Poland faced many challenges, then, but overall they were developing well, and Curie expressly commended the Polish government for its "very considerable efforts to encourage intellectual work" alongside acknowledging the generous funding provided by private philanthropists.[24]

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16 Beginning in 1929, the publicly funded, rather one-sided Austro-German Research Assistance scheme (Österreichisch-Deutsche Wissenschaftshilfe), designed to bring the two countries closer together, also provided rather more substantial German funding for Austrian research projects, albeit predominantly in more traditional fields. After the NSDAP came to power in Germany and was banned in Austria in 1933, German funding was reduced and increasingly dispensed in accordance with narrow ideological criteria. See Silke Fengler, Günther Luxbacher, "'Aufrechterhaltung der gemeinsamen Kultur': Die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft und die Österreichisch-Deutsche Wissenschaftshilfe in der Zwischenkriegszeit", *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 34, no. 4 (2011): 303–28.

17 "Provisional Memorandum on the Condition of Intellectual Life in Poland, submitted to the Council by the ICIC and approved by the Council on 13 September 1922 (Mme Skłodowska Curie)", 24 August 1922, 9, UNAG, R1046/13C/23502/23024.

18 This memorandum is discussed in detail in Stanley W. Pycior, "Poland's Intellectual Institutions after the First World War: Contemporary Inquiries and Reports", *The Polish Review* 46, no. 3 (2001): 345–55.

19 For overview of the re-establishment of the Polish state, see Norman Davies, *Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 115–23.

20 Provisional Memorandum on the Condition of Intellectual Life in Poland, 9.

21 See Pycior, "Poland's Intellectual Institutions after the First World War", 349.

22 Ibid., 12–13.

23 Provisional Memorandum on the Condition of Intellectual Life in Poland, 9.

24 Ibid., 13.

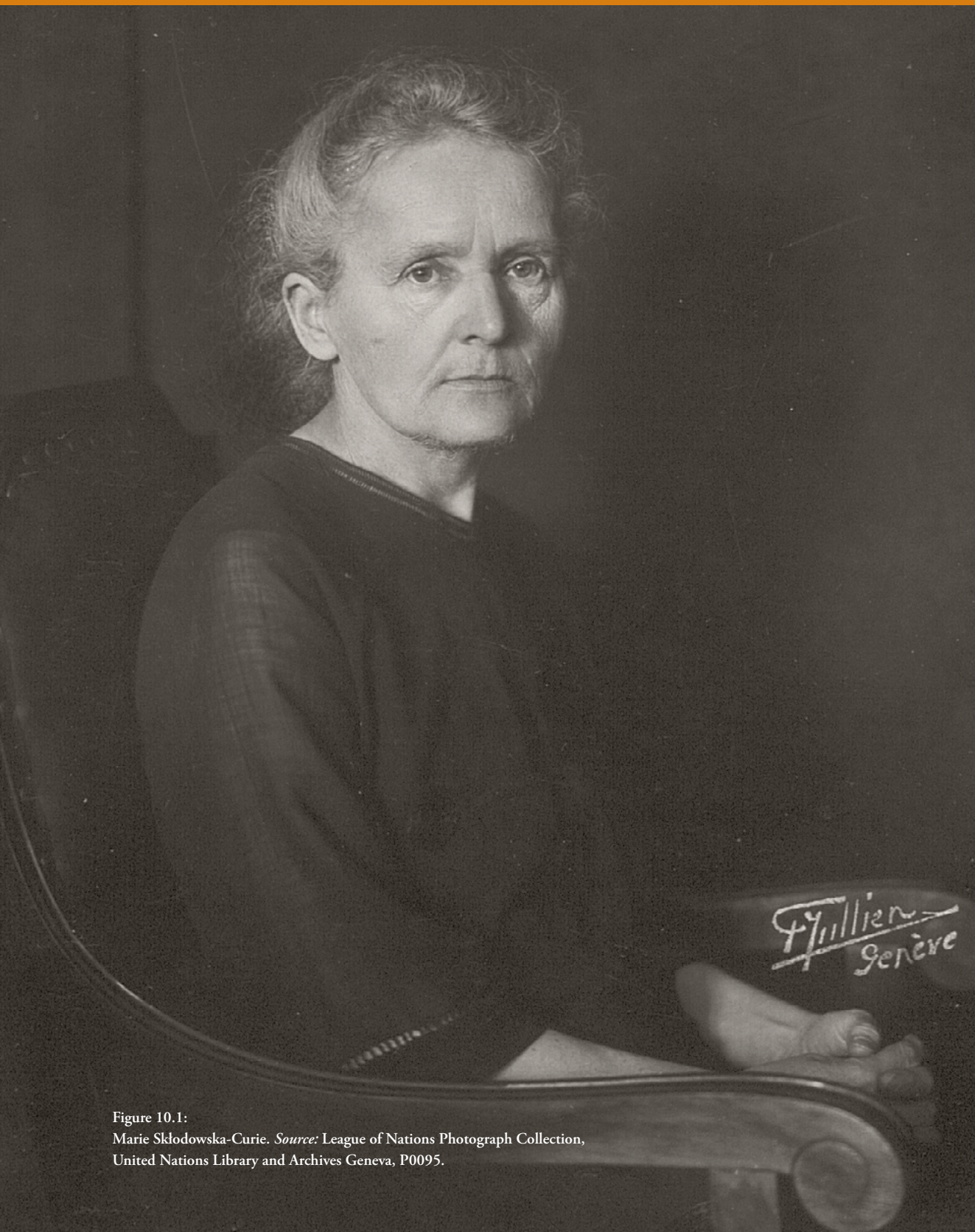

Figure 10.1:
Marie Skłodowska-Curie. *Source:* League of Nations Photograph Collection, United Nations Library and Archives Geneva, P0095.

Where help really was needed, Curie noted, was in the field of meaningful international cooperation. Young Polish scholars, researchers and students in particular had few international contacts, and current funding priorities, compounded by currency-exchange issues, made it virtually impossible for them to initiate or participate in any form of international cooperation.[25] A particular desideratum were opportunities to meet "the most widespread and insistent demand", namely, "for foreign scholarships".[26] Hence, she concluded, "It is in this sphere of intellectual exchange with the other nations that Poland requires assistance". In light of the proclivity for authoritarianism, antisemitism and misogyny subsequently displayed by all too many Polish students, one can only characterize this as a particularly prescient key request.[27] In short, Poland's needs, as Curie outlined them, neatly matched "the general framework" of the ICIC's programme,[28] insofar as there was "no necessity for financial assistance or intervention as in the case of Austria".[29]

In response to these preliminary reports, the League Council commissioned more detailed studies of the existing challenges and possible remedies for Austria and Poland as well as a whole range of other countries. In addition, the ICIC encouraged the creation of national committees in order to attain in-depth information on what – ranging from access to books and journals to scientific research equipment – scholars and academic institutions needed most urgently. In 1922, the Hungarians took the lead, establishing a national committee chaired by Albert Berzeviczy, the erstwhile education minister who had assumed the presidency of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1913.

The national committees tended to be created under the auspices either of universities (as in Bulgaria, Estonia, Greece, Latvia and Lithuania) or of Academies of Sciences (as in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania and Yugoslavia). In Poland, the committee was established by the Mianowski Foundation for the promotion of scientific research; in Austria, it was run by a group of individuals of high academic standing.[30] By the summer of 1923, national committees had been created in only twelve states, all of them in Central and Eastern Europe. Yet others gradually followed suit, and committees were also established in various other League of Nations members states both in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Switzerland) and overseas (the first in Brazil in 1923). Eventually, more than forty such committees existed.[31]

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25 Ibid., 11.

26 Ibid., 12–13.

27 See Daniel Laqua and Georgina Brewis, *Rehearsals for Democracy: Student Life in Central and Eastern Europe, 1919–1923* (London: British Educational Research Association, 2024), 12. In Austria, the student organizations proved to be a recruitment base for the Nazis; see Boyer, *Austria*, 727–8; Klaus Taschwer, *Hochburg des Antisemitismus, Der Niedergang der Universität Wien im 20. Jahrhundert* (Vienna: Czernin Verlag 2015), 71–97; Linda Erker, "Studierende der Universität Wien und ihr Antisemitismus in der Zwischenkriegszeit", in *Antisemitismus in Österreich 1933–1938*, ed. Gertrude Enderle Burcel, Ilse Reiter-Zatloukal (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag 2018), 785–806.

28 Provisional Memorandum on the Condition of Intellectual Life in Poland, 13.

29 Ibid.

30 ICIC, Minutes of the Second Session, Geneva, 26 July–2 August 1923 (1 September 1923), 60–62, UNAG, C-570-M-224-1923-XII.

31 See the map of national committees with their dates of creation at Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018), 233. See also ICIC, Minutes of the Third Session, Paris, 5–8 December 1923 (1 January 1924), 19–20, 10, UNAG, C-3-M-3-1924-XII; ICIC, Minutes of the Fourth Session, Geneva, 25–29 July 1924 (15 August 1924), 10, UNAG, A-20-1924-XII.

Alfons Dopsch and intellectual cooperation

In his capacity as secretary of the ICIC, Halecki played a central role in the implementation of these decisions. He organized the survey, drafted the questionnaire and personally led national studies on most of the Central and Eastern European League member states. He was responsible for the coordination between the national committees and relayed inquiries to relevant third parties. It was also Halecki who travelled to Vienna in October 1922 and invited Alfons Dopsch to act as the ICIC's Austrian correspondent and conduct the Austrian survey. Given that the number of full committee members was limited to twelve, the committee was unable to co-opt Dopsch, and Halecki feared – rightly as it turned out – that Dopsch would be hesitant merely to assist the committee as an outside expert.[32] Hence, he thought it better to discuss the issue with him in person. He was able to sweeten the prospect with an offer of 10,000 Swiss francs to cover Dopsch's activities, expenses and printing costs. Their meeting took place in the Department of Economic and Cultural History at the University of Vienna, where Dopsch introduced Halecki to some of Austria's most important academic leaders, who inquired whether the ICIC might offer assistance to remedy the precarious circumstances of the university's academic staff. Halecki could only explain to them that direct financial support of academics and researchers did not fall within the committee's remit. Dopsch finally agreed to take on the role of the ICIC's Austrian correspondent.[33]

Although his doctoral thesis, completed in 1890, had focused on the inaugural battle of the Seven Years' War, Dopsch, who held postdoctoral qualifications in Austrian history (1893) and historical methodology (1896), was predominantly a medievalist. He initially worked on constitutional history but acquired his international reputation as an economic historian. In the immediate post-war period, he drew considerable attention with a two-volume account of *The Economic and Social Foundations of European Civilization from Caesar to Charlemagne* (1918, 1920).[34] Dopsch stressed the continuities connecting late antiquity to the Merovingian and Carolingian periods and the centrality of peaceful interaction and reciprocal exchange to medieval Europe's economic development and the displacement of the Roman by the Holy Roman (German) Empire by means of peaceful expansion. Soon after the cataclysm of the First World War and in light of its still eminently palpable catastrophic impact, Dopsch's optimistic account had considerable appeal. It opened the doors to international intellectual cooperation. Both de Reynold and Halecki later referred to Dopsch in their scholarship.

In October 1922, once the League Council had approved Dopsch's appointment, Eric Drummond, the Secretary-General of the League of Nations, officially invited Dopsch to accept the role as the ICIC's Austrian correspondent.[35] Deploying League funds to set up an office in Vienna and hire an administrator, Dopsch began to devote himself fully to the work of the committee.

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[32] Having originally been proposed as a full member of the committee, Reynold had now proposed Dopsch's co-optation as an Austrian expert at the first meeting of the ICIC in August 1922, see ICIC, Minutes of the First Session, Geneva, 1–5 August 1922 (11 October 1922), 9, UNAG, C-711-M-423-1922-XII.

[33] Oskar Halecki to the Secretary-General [Eric Drummond], 23 October 1922. In a note for the dossier, Drummond warned that "we must be careful about committing ourself [sic] to helping intellectual work in one particular country". Note for the File, E.D., 24 October 1922. LNA R1046-13C-24013-23024/Jacket 1.

[34] Alfons Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung aus der Zeit von Caesar bis auf Karl den Großen*. 2 vols. (Vienna: L.W. Seidel & Sohn, 1918–20; 2nd ed. 1923–24). The book was also published in English, Italian and Russian: Alfons Dopsch, T*he Economic and Social Foundations of European Civilization* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1937).

[35] Resolutions proposed by M. Hanotaux and adopted by the Council on 4 October 1922 (5 October 1922), UNAG, R1046/13C/23502/23024; ICIC, Minutes of the First Session, Geneva, 1–5 August 1922 (11 October 1922), 9, UNAG, C-711-M-423-1922-XII.

His priorities included gaining access to assistance schemes offered by universities abroad and the creation of a book and periodical exchange programme between the Austrian National Library and foreign partners (such as the UK's Department of Scientific and Industrial Exchange, the Chemical Society of London and the University of Calcutta). Although his national survey for the ICIC was unusually thorough and detailed, he completed it within a year. It drew on responses from more than 450 individuals and institutions, including prominent artists and writers as well as universities, libraries, archives, museums and learned societies. By comparison, his peers had circulated only 12 questionnaires in Bulgaria, 30 in Yugoslavia, 50 in Romania, 52 in Greece, 140 in Hungary and 200 in Czechoslovakia. Dopsch was obviously keen to demonstrate just how well-placed Austria was to excel not only in the humanities and sciences but also in the arts – if only it received the assistance it desperately needed to preserve its well established academic, scientific and cultural infrastructure. In 1924, the ICIC published his report as a 50-page pamphlet in both French and English.[36]

In April 1923, Dopsch assumed the role of chair of the newly created Austrian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation. It comprised eminent intellectuals from leading institutions, including the Austrian National Library, the university and polytechnic in Vienna, the Academy of Music, the Academy of Fine Arts, the Academy of Sciences, the Vienna Burgtheater, the Austrian Federation of Intellectual Workers and the Austrian League of Nations Union. The members embodied the ideological orientation that prevailed in interwar Austrian institutions: Catholic, conservative, anti-communist, pro-German and, to a certain degree, antisemitic. At their inaugural meeting, they expressly declared their allegiance to (Greater) Germany and stressed their keen desire to cooperate with their colleagues in the Reich.[37]

Alongside more obvious activities, such as the promotion of academic exchange programmes and publications, the commission also took it upon itself to reject what it deemed "unjustified" demands from the successor states who wanted objects from Austrian archives, museums and collections returned to them. In addition, it submitted various "noteworthy applications" to Halecki's office in Geneva that were compatible neither with the specific mandate of the ICIC nor with the harsh conditions of the aforementioned Geneva Protocol.[38]

Dopsch soon realized that he was unlikely to get what he needed from the ICIC. Although the League appealed (as we will see) to the national governments to support their respective national ICIC committees financially, the Austrian government offered only scant assistance. Nor did the commission receive any help from Alfred Rudolf Zimmermann, the Commissioner-General sent to Vienna by the League to oversee the reconstruction agreement. At the ICIC's third meeting in December 1923, Dopsch suggested that the committee approach Zimmermann and ask him to ensure that the dismissal of university staff was "limited to the strict minimum" and undertaken only in "consultation with the university authorities". Yet the committee decided

[36] Alfons Dopsch, Enquiry into the Conditions of Intellectual Work: Intellectual Life in the Various Countries. Austria. Conditions of Intellectual Work and Workers (Geneva: League of Nations, 1924).

[37] "Konstituierende Sitzung der Österreichischen Landeskommission für die geistige Zusammenarbeit, Wien – Zentrale Völkerbund Genf", Dopsch Papers, Archive of the University of Vienna (UAV).

[38] Oskar Halecki, "Komisja Współpracy Umysłowej II" [Commission for Intellectual Cooperation II], *Przegląd Współczesny* [Contemporary Review] 12 (1923): 28–47, 35; see also Brzeziński, "Oskar Halecki", 10–11. On the wider context, see Nathan Marcus, *Austrian Reconstruction and the Collapse of Global Finance 1921–1931* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018); Nathan Marcus, "Austria, the League of Nations, and the Birth of Multilateral Financial Control", in Becker and Wheatley, *Remaking Central Europe*, 127–44.

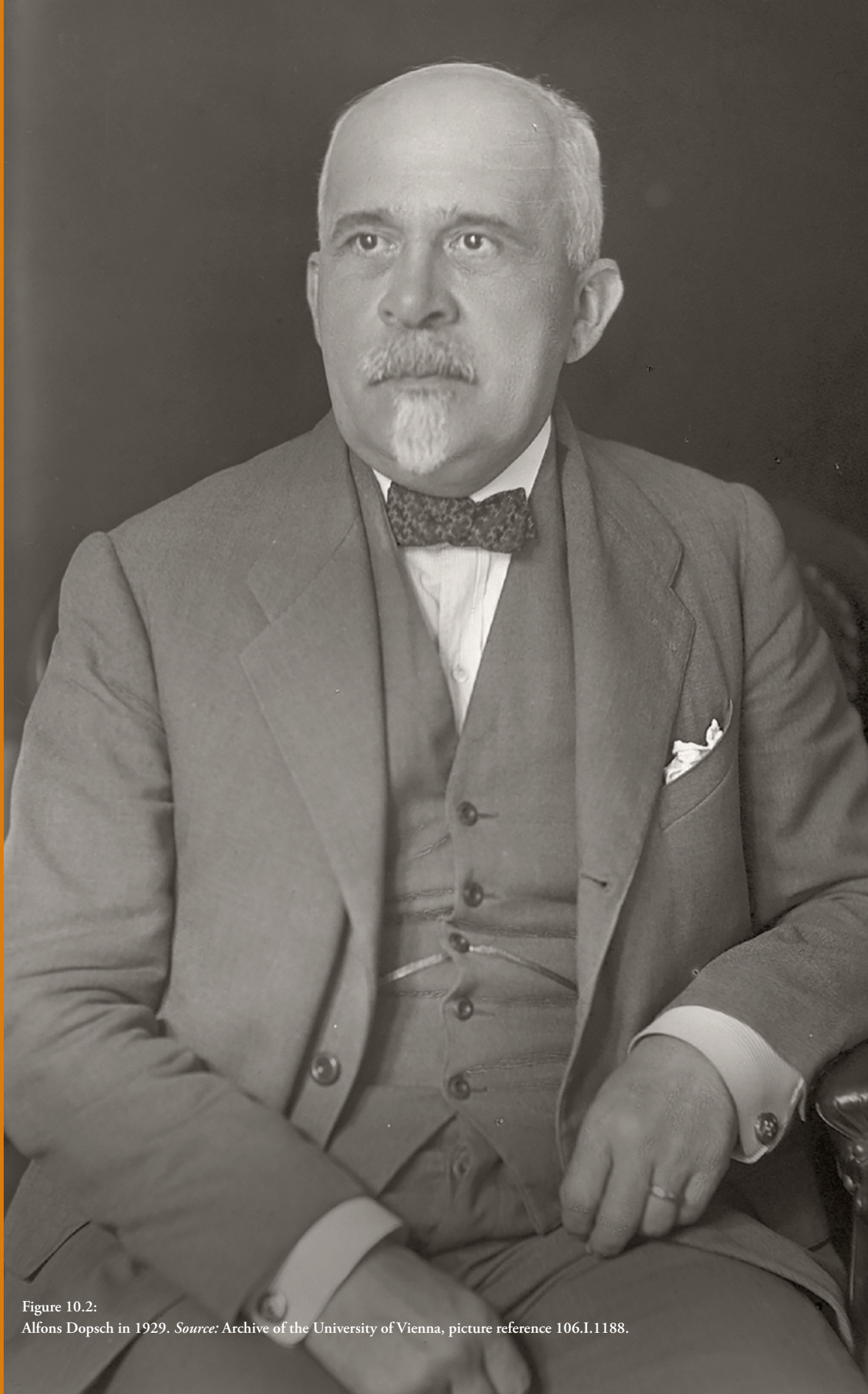

Figure 10.2:
Alfons Dopsch in 1929. *Source:* Archive of the University of Vienna, picture reference 106.I.1188.

not to intervene directly and instead asked the League to approach the Austrian government in this matter.[39] When it came to the funding of intellectual endeavours, Dopsch noted in a letter, the "international savings commissar systematically withholds even the bare minimum, no matter how urgent".[40]

Many of the 450 individuals and institutions whom Dopsch had surveyed assumed that prompt financial support would be forthcoming. When the aid failed to materialize, they blamed Dopsch, insinuating that he had failed to convey to the ICIC just how dire their circumstances were. Dopsch, in turn, accused the ICIC of having no coherent or compelling plan of action and threatened to resign his membership of the committee.[41]

Setting priorities: financial or intellectual aid?

The national surveys conducted by Halecki and Dopsch in Central and Eastern Europe were discussed at the ICIC's second meeting in late July/early August 1923, which Dopsch decided at the last moment not to attend. Nor did his report arrive in time to be circulated to the committee. Instead, the League's Under-General-Secretary Inazō Nitobe prepared a summary for the committee members and spoke on Dopsch's behalf. Halecki, by contrast, presented the surveys he had conducted himself. In light of the reports, a controversy emerged as to whether to prioritize financial or intellectual support. Perhaps inevitably, Dopsch and Halecki had arrived at opposing conclusions. The Austrian republic had inherited much of the rich intellectual heritage of the Habsburg Monarchy. Yet, confronted with the trauma of the empire's disintegration, its Vienna-based elites in particular now faced the disintegration of that rich heritage too, barring an influx of considerable external funding. The elites in the reborn Polish republic, by contrast, emboldened by the country's national renaissance, were interested not in the preservation of the past but in new beginnings, new institutions and new international networks.

Dopsch painted a sobering picture of the severe depletion of intellectual life in Austria due to the war and its aftereffects. On the one hand, he placed great emphasis on the multi-ethnic character of Vienna's vibrant academic and cultural landscape created by the influx of academics, authors, artists, musicians and intellectuals from the non-German reaches of the (former) empire who "found remunerative employment and opportunities of self-development" in the Austrian capital.[42] On the other hand, he also noted that, while "all received encouragement", the "main efforts of the authorities were directed towards promoting the German intellectual movement". As a result, Vienna had been "for centuries the home and centre of a type of German culture which, under the influence of the surrounding peoples, had acquired a distinctive character".[43]

Yet, in "a dangerous transposition of social strata", the well-heeled aristocratic patrons whose estates now lay in other countries were unlikely still to spend part of the year in Vienna and they had been displaced by arrivals from Galicia, Russia and the Bukovina – that is, "the less advanced adjacent East", as Dopsch would have it – who were interested only in material goods. Not only

39 Minutes of the Third Session, 47.

40 Alfons Dopsch to Inazō Nitobe, Under-Secretary-General of the League of Nations, 15 August 1923, UNAG, R1046/13C/24013/23024 (Jacket-1 Dopsch).

41 On Dopsch's anger towards the ICIC, see Feichtinger, "On the Fraught Internationalism of Intellectuals", 186–9.

42 Dopsch, *Enquiry*, 3.

43 Ibid.

were they no philanthropists, they "bring with them materialistic and rationalistic conceptions of life". In addition, inflation had robbed most members of the middle classes of the disposable income many of them had once lavished on the fruits of intellectual and cultural endeavours.[44] Dopsch was particularly worried that the longstanding influx of German-speaking students from Moravia, Bohemia and Silesia, who had traditionally gone on to form the backbone of the Austrian academy and free professions, would cease.[45]

In stark contrast to the "triumph of the *nouveaux riches*",[46] those engaged in serious intellectual and cultural undertakings suffered from poor housing, hunger, low wages and a comprehensive loss of social status:

> Every pleasure in life has vanished; they have an overwhelming burden of sorrow and suffering, the psychical reaction of which is plain to see. Many people who have lost their fortunes have become mad. There is an increasing number of suicides, and many people renounce a life which seems to have lost all meaning and value.[47]

Traumatized by the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Dopsch identified three ways of preserving what might yet be salvaged. The first was to stand up for the German-speaking minority in Czechoslovakia. He himself went on to publish several works on the historical status of Germans in Bohemia. That these endeavours were underpinned by deep-seated anti-Slavic resentment is evident from a memoir he published in 1925. Having grown up in Bohemia, he explained, he had learnt early on to "distrust the deceitfulness and deviousness of the Slavs, to keep my eyes peeled and always to view the assurances of the other side with caution and skepticism".[48]

The second plank of Dopsch's strategy was unwavering German nationalism and support of the Greater German cause. It was clear from the outset that he was "enthusiastic about the idea of uniting all Germans in a common state".[49] Although he himself did not join the Nazi party, he shared with those Austrian historians who later did do so the view that Austrian history was not national but regional – in the sense of southeast German – history, and he yearned for the "Anschluss" that eventually occurred in 1938. This orientation was also shared by several other members of the ICIC's Austrian National Committee. As previously noted, it declared its allegiance to Greater Germany at its inaugural meeting, which took place in Dopsch's office at the University of Vienna on 28 April 1923.[50]

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44 Resume of Professor A. Dopsch's Report on the Intellectual Work and its Representatives in Austria [undated draft; the French version is dated 24 July 1923], UNAG, R1050/13C/29771/24014.

45 Ibid., 2.

46 ICIC, Minutes of the Second Session, Geneva, 26 July–2 August 1923 (1 September 1923), 11, UNAG, C-570-M-224-1923-XII.

47 Dopsch, *Enquiry*, 9.

48 Alfons Dopsch, "Selbstdarstellung", in *Die Geschichtswissenschaft der Gegenwart in Selbstdarstellungen*, ed. Sigrid H. Steinberg (Leizpig: Meiner, 1925–26), 1: 51–90, 55.

49 Ibid., 52.

50 The minutes of the meetings of the Austrian National Committee between 1923 and 1938 are preserved in the Dopsch Papers held by the Archive of the University of Vienna.

The third tenet of Dopsch's programme to rescue his country's proud intellectual and cultural heritage was antisemitism (which, in his case, also extended to Jewish converts to Christianity). Antisemitism was no taboo at the time, and antisemites proudly identified themselves as such. Dopsch was no exception, with his antisemitism earning him the respect of radical nationalists within the student body who subjected the university's Jewish students to regular violence throughout the 1920s. Raised as a Catholic, Dopsch was too devout to countenance the loudish racial antisemitism of Pan-German nationalist Georg von Schönerer. As a German nationalist, he also felt uncomfortable with Karl Lueger's insufficiently doctrinaire antisemitism. Still, Dopsch's obsession with "the Jews" was notable, even at the University of Vienna, which was a hotbed of antisemitism in this period.[51] As the historian Wilhelm Bauer wrote in the summer of 1919:

> I try not to be an antisemite à la Dopsch who decries Jewish domination behind everything (not just in politics) &, to my mind, tends to make too much of the Jews' ingenuity. By contrast, it seems to me that practical antisemitism is the best kind of antisemitism, i.e., fervent solidarity among all non-Jews. As things stand, one is frequently compelled simply to dispense with objectivity in order not to be overrun. All semester, I have therefore voted down every Jew as a matter of principle and will continue to do so.[52]

While Dopsch was not part of the *Bärenhöhle* (Bears' Den), the notorious secretive society devoted to preventing Jewish academics from rising through the ranks,[53] he did join other self-avowedly antisemitic organizations based in Vienna, including the German Club and the German Community.[54] The latter was a clandestine association of prominent Catholics determined to fend off Bolshevism, freemasonry and "the Jews".[55]

Dopsch's contemporaries knew full well what he meant when, in his *Enquiry* for the ICIC, he complained about the "*nouveaux riches*" from Galicia, Russia and the Bukovina who brought "materialistic and rationalistic conceptions" with them. Yet, just in case someone should not catch his meaning, he clarified for good measure that they were "mostly Jews".[56] Discussing reasons why the most talented no longer pursued academic careers, he explained that "it has also been noticed that there is an increasingly large number of Jews among the younger professors, especially if we include those who have been converted to Christianity".[57] Nor, did Austria benefit financially from the influx of "foreign students and notably those of the Jewish race", despite "the fact that they pay six times more than native students".[58]

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51 See the chapters in Oliver Rathkolb, *Der lange Schatten des Antisemitismus:. Kritische Auseinandersetzungen mit der Geschichte der Universität Wien im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: V & R Vienna University Press, 2013).

52 Letter of Wilhelm Bauer to Heinrich Srbik, 19 August 1919, in *Heinrich Ritter von Srbik. Die wissenschaftliche Korrespondenz des Historikers 1912–1945*, ed. Jürgen Kämmerer (Boppard am Rhein: Boldt, 1988), 130.

53 See Klaus Taschwer, "Geheimsache Bärenhöhle: Wie eine antisemitische Professorenclique der Universität Wien nach 1918 wissenschaftliche Exzellenz vertrieb", in *Alma mater antisemitica: Akademisches Milieu, Juden und Antisemitismus an den Universitäten Europas zwischen 1918 und 1939*, ed. Regina Fritz, Grzegorz Rossolinski-Liebe and Jana Starek (Vienna: New Academic Press, 2016), 221–42.

54 See Andreas Huber, Linda Erker and Klaus Taschwer, *Der Deutsche Klub: Austro-Nazis in der Hofburg* (Vienna: Czernin Verlag, 2020), 40.

55 Buchner, "Alfons Dopsch (1868–1953)", 161.

56 Dopsch, *Enquiry*, 6.

57 Ibid., 15.

58 Resume of Professor A. Dopsch's Report, 4.

The form of Viennese "German culture" Dopsch was so keen to have the ICIC help preserve was of a rather distinct kind, then.[59] Given that the Austrian authorities were in no position to sustain it, he expected external help, not in the form of moral support but of hard cash. Yet the ICIC was in no position to meet his expectations, neither in relation to the individuals nor to the institutions that embodied the defunct empire's cherished academic, scientific, artistic and intellectual heritage.

As noted at the outset of the section, Oskar Halecki's findings differed from Dopsch's in several respects. Drawing on the responses to the questionnaires he had drafted in December 1922 and sent to governments, learned societies, universities and relevant individuals with a cover letter signed by Henri Bergson (as ICIC president), Halecki presented "The first results of the enquiry concerning countries of Central and Eastern Europe" in person at the aforementioned IIC session in the summer of 1923. "It is true", he noted, "that all the difficulties which press upon the intellectual life of the whole world are encountered in an intensified form in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe".[60] Yet, like Curie, whom Halecki had supported in the preparation of her preliminary report, he also saw considerable grounds for optimism:

> In spite of all obstacles, intellectual life in those countries has received an astonishing and very encouraging impetus since peace was restored. New possibilities of development have appeared; new centres of intensive intellectual activity have been established; the organs of intellectual life, though in many cases weak and insecure, have, nevertheless, increased in number and improved in efficiency owing to the desperate nature of the struggle which they have to wage against economic perils.[61]

Given the willingness of the Central and Eastern European states to fund academic and scientific endeavours, progress had been made since the end of the war, and "the general result was most encouraging": "Intellectual life in these countries, the majority of which owed their independence to the late war, had undergone an extraordinary development (creation of new universities, learned societies, research institutions, libraries, etc.)".[62] New academic institutions – including the Union of Polish Learned Societies of Lwów (1919), the University of Ljubljana (1919), the Polytechnic School of Temesvár (1920) and the University of Skopje (1921) – had been established in several countries. The Mianowski Foundation in Warsaw now functioned as a national research council.[63] In Prague, the Czech engineering academy was upgraded to a fully-fledged polytechnic in 1920.[64] For all the economic and financial difficulties these countries faced, their prevailing spirit of optimism alone "would suffice to prove that European civilisation was by no means condemned to death, as certain persons had seemed to fear".[65]

59 Dopsch, *Enquiry*, 3.

60 Report by the Secretary of the Committee, Minutes of the Second Session, 50.

61 Ibid.

62 Minutes of the Second Session, 11.

63 On the establishment of new Polish scientific and scholarly associations, institutes and museums see Pycior, "Poland's Intellectual Institutions after the First World War", 349.

64 See Antonín Kostlán, Jan Janko and Ladislav Niklíček, "The Organizational Structure of Science, 1882–1945", in *Bohemia Docta: The Historical Roots of Science and Scholarship in the Czech Lands*, ed. Alena Alena Míšková, Martin Franc and Antonín Kostlán (Prague: Academia, 2018), 269–308.

65 Minutes of the Second Session, 11.

To be sure, they too "refer to the economic crisis and the lack of financial resources as one of the obstacles to their intellectual life", Halecki reported, but "they fully recognise that the Committee is not in a position to grant them pecuniary assistance. In no case have gifts of money been requested." Instead, "All replies agree in stating that the financial crisis – severe as it is – can be surmounted provided that the more favoured countries assist the nations which have been most sorely tried to escape from their intellectual isolation".[66] What they needed from the committee was "intellectual assistance which would allow these countries to come out of their isolation by means of exchanges of professors and students, and above all, of books and periodicals".[67] The collaboration with "the great Western countries", to which most of the countries he had surveyed aspired, would be mutually beneficial.[68] The "sanguine enthusiasm in countries whose intellectual life had hitherto been kept in shackles" – where "many new centres, rich with promise for the future" were now "springing successively into life" – would offset the "intellectual exhaustion which is apparent in some countries of the older civilization". Halecki was greatly encouraged by the fact that these countries, located on "the most exposed frontier of European civilization", demonstrated a "persistent desire to keep in close contact with that civilization and to assist in overcoming the forces which had temporarily retarded its progress".[69]

In keeping with this assessment, Halecki later described these countries as the borderlands of Western civilization.[70] He was in Switzerland when the Germans invaded Poland in 1939. From there he emigrated to the United States the following year, where he joined Fordham University in 1944. In an essay on "The Historical Role of Central Eastern Europe", published in the same year, he wrote, with reference to the Central and Eastern European countries whose intellectual landscape he had surveyed for the ICIC, that

> Culturally, the chief result of their liberation was the establishment of close relations with the Latin and Anglo-Saxon west and a genuine desire for co-operation with the western nations, clearly manifested even in those countries of central Europe which for centuries had been under eastern influence.[71]

To encapsulate this orientation, Halecki coined the term "East Central Europe" to denote that culturally, the countries in question differed from both Soviet Eastern Europe and German Central Europe.[72] With his essay on this subject being published over twenty years after the ICIC discussions of 1923, it indicated a durable engagement with the question of "regions" and with the political entities and cultures that might constitute them.

After some debate, the members of the ICIC assembled in Geneva in the summer of 1923 and, while clearly prioritizing intellectual over financial support, reached a compromise. Firstly, the ICIC decided to encourage the creation of national committees also in those countries "whose intellectual

66 Report by the Secretary of the Committee, 51.

67 Minutes of the Second Session, 12.

68 Ibid.

69 Report by the Secretary of the Committee, 50.

70 Oskar Halecki, *Borderlands of Western Civilization: A History of East Central Europe* (New York: Ronald Press, 1952).

71 Oskar Halecki, "The Historical Role of Central Eastern Europe", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 232 (1944): 9–19, 17.

72 Ibid., 3–4.

Figure 10.3:
Oskar Halecki in 1936. *Source:* Wikimedia Commons.

life is in a more favourable situation", the implication being that they would be expected to defray the costs of the various envisaged exchange programmes.

Secondly, the ICIC asked the League Council to "invite" the relevant governments to "give moral and financial support" to the respective national committees. Thirdly, an amendment was eventually adopted, asking the Council to allow the ICIC to "receive funds from any institution or individual interested in its effort", which would then be distributed to the national committees. In addition, acknowledging that needs varied from country to country, the ICIC granted considerable leeway to the already existing or soon to be established national committees to set their own priorities.[73]

In January 1924, League Secretary-General Drummond informed the governments of the members states of the ICIC's "systematic scheme of action", which the Council had approved in December 1923.[74] As we have seen, new national committees were subsequently formed in various Western European countries (including Belgium, France and Switzerland), but also in countries much further afield (including Australia, Brazil, Japan and the USA).

Impacts and implications

The ICIC initially focused exclusively on scholarly and scientific endeavours. Accordingly, it established three sub-committees concerned with bibliographical issues, relations between universities and intellectual property, respectively. When the ICIC lamented that it lacked the institutional and administrative resources required to pursue its agenda in earnest, the French government offered to install an International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) in Paris that would serve as the committee's executive. It eventually opened for business in 1926. The delineation of the Institute's remit offered an opportunity to reconsider the committee's mission, and it was decided at this juncture to add an Artistic and Literary Relations Section to the existing portfolio. This must have offered some belated satisfaction to Dopsch and his colleagues on the Austrian National Committee who had wanted the ICIC to take responsibility for the preservation of their country's rich cultural heritage from the outset. Yet once again, good intentions were not matched by appropriate fundings streams, and the Austrian National Committee was unable to exert any great influence on the IIIC. As Dopsch saw it, "The Geneva Commission and its executive Institute founded and funded in Paris by the French government overwhelmingly serve France's political goals and the agenda of its vassal states, notably the Little Entente".[75]

These observations raise wider questions about the impact of these early efforts. What, then, was the ICIC actually able to do for the academics, intellectuals and scientists of Central Europe? To be sure, it facilitated the integration of the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires into a new international system of intellectual cooperation. Yet its resources were simply too limited to make a real difference to the academic infrastructure depleted by the First World War and its aftermath.

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73 Minutes of the Second Session, 21.

74 Eric Drummond, Letter to the Governments, 29 January 1924, UNAG, R1063/13C/31902/31595.

75 Alfons Dopsch to Josef Kunz, 24 November 1925, Dopsch Papers, UAV.

Given their access to the inner circle in Geneva, Curie and Halecki were only too aware of these limitations and understood that requesting financial assistance was pointless. To make things worse, even the envisaged exchange programmes for Polish scholars and students turned out to be beyond the committee's means.[76] Given these bleak prospects, it made perfect sense for the Polish ICIC rapporteurs to make a virtue of necessity and stress the country's self-sufficiency, offering an account that tallied well with the narrative of triumphant national rebirth.

In order to actively counter the trauma of imperial decline and its intellectual legacy, Dopsch and his peers took the opposite approach, demanding financial assistance at every turn even though they were left in no doubt from the outset that the ICIC lacked the requisite resources. In 1924, the League published a fund-raising appeal for Hungarian universities and research institutes "similar to that made in 1922 on behalf of the Austrian intellectual workers",[77] and each issue of the League's *Monthly Summary* reported on the country's increasing fiscal stabilization. Understandably, the Austrian National Committee feared that announcements of this kind were likely to suggest to potential donors that the Austrian academy was essentially over the worst. It responded with a memorandum to inform the international donors that the fiscal stabilization and balancing of the national budget propagated by the League of Nations had not brought about any improvement for Austrian science and scholarship. In fact, university funding still stood at only 36 per cent of its pre-war level, and institutions of higher education consequently languished in a constant state of emergency.[78] As Dopsch informed Josef L. Kunz, the head of the legal section operated by the Austrian League of Nations Union (Völkerbundliga) and a close associate of Hans Kelsen, in no uncertain terms, he blamed the committee's "misleading representation" of the state of play for the loss of "almost all of the financial support from abroad that previously helped us stay afloat". His colleagues in the Austrian National Committee shared his frustration, concluding, as he informed Kunz, that "this kind of intellectual cooperation is of no use to us at all".[79]

Even so, while the ICIC was no more able to fund the Austrian than the Polish exchange programme, Austria's interaction with the ICIC did have some very real benefits, including the participation in its international book and periodicals exchange programme coordinated by the Austrian National Library. The Austrian National Committee created a directory of Austria's 528 museums and,[80] as we have seen, it coordinated the negotiations with the successor states over the restitution of cultural property, successfully fending off Hungary's claims to all but 188 objects.[81]

Yet, what weighed much more heavily than any specific advantage accruing from Austria's affiliation with the ICIC was the simple fact that Austria, its defeat in the First World War and its role in unleashing it in the first place notwithstanding, was readily integrated into the international

76 Pycior, "Poland's Intellectual Institutions after the First World War", 351.

77 "Appeal on Behalf of the Hungarian Intellectuals Workers", *Monthly Summary of the League of Nations* 4, no. 11 (1924): 254.

78 "Minutes. Ninth Meeting of the Landeskommission für geistige Zusammenarbeit", Vienna, 4 December 1925, and [Richard, Wettstein], "Denkschrift ueber die Lage der wissenschaftlichen Institute und Unternehmungen in Oesterreich im Jahre 1925", both in Dopsch Papers, UAV.

79 Alfons Dopsch to Josef Kunz, 24 November 1925, Dopsch Papers, UAV.

80 Minutes. 26th meeting of the Austrian National Commitee for Intellectual Cooperation, Vienna, 25 June 1934, attached: "Die Museen Österreichs", Dopsch Papers, UAV.

81 Minutes, 24th meeting of the Austrian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, Vienna, 28 June 1933, in Dopsch Papers, UAV.

network the ICIC set out to create.[82] The Austrian National Committee was able to make its voice heard on issues such as copyright law, the revision of textbooks and the preservation of monuments, and its affiliation with the ICIC lent it institutional authority in its endeavours to press Austria's interwar governments into paying something at least resembling due attention to the country's academic, cultural and scientific infrastructure. In addition, its interaction with the ICIC later provided a template of sorts for the aftermath of the Second World War and Austria's admission to UNESCO in 1948.

[82] Austria joined the League of Nations as early as 1920 and remained a member until the Anschluss in 1938. Germany joined in 1926 and left in 1933. The German National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation was constituted by a Reich government decree in March 1928.

11

Searching for a New Yardstick:

The League of Nations, Intellectual Cooperation and the Soviet Challenge

Anastassiya Schacht

"As the product and the continuing instrument of social revolution, the Soviet system requires a new and different yardstick for measuring its various features". In 1934, this illuminating statement opened an article in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*.[1] The author – historian Samuel N. Harper – surveyed the decade-and-a-half-long development of Bolshevik interrelations with the world outside its ideological realm. Harper argued for a more diversified and complex approach towards the communist regime, which by then had abandoned its initial, more ardent pursuit to ignite a world revolution and moved towards international cooperation, most notably with the League of Nations. In the meantime, the League had undergone nearly fifteen years of development and was thus able to look back at a long, complex and conflicted relationship with the Soviet state. The League's many officers and bodies adapted their approach, based on their watchful observation of political sympathies among the great powers, whose opinions were due bearing, but also on developments within the Soviet Union.[2]

This chapter traces the League's response to Soviet communism through the prism of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC). Established in 1922, the ICIC sought to position itself as a platform for scholarly, not political, communication, which, at one level, facilitated contacts with the Soviet state at a time when the Bolshevik government was both lacking international recognition and itself vigorously rejecting systematic and institutional interaction with the League's Secretariat, thus denying the League recognition altogether.

The ICIC had to deliberate carefully in designating its Russian interlocutors, and it moved through roughly three distinct stages in this respect. The vector went from early, wholehearted support for refugee intellectuals from Soviet Russia, through attempted relief for intellectuals who decided to stay and become Soviet subjects, to an attempt at dialogue with communist officials. Following this change of sympathies – or rather of political realities in interwar politics translating into intellectual cooperation – this chapter spotlights the ICIC's endeavours to identify, preserve and continuously engage in dialogue with a community that was fractured by ideology, geographically dispersed, economically and politically marginalized and that was still striving to remain part of the international intellectual community.

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1 Samuel N. Harper, "The Soviet Union – National or International?", *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 175, no. 1 (1934): 51–9.

2 Elsewhere, I have discussed the Soviet Union's ambivalent relationship with the international community with a focus on public health: Anastassiya Schacht, "Soviet Public Health and Its Pattern of Involved Non-Attachment in International Organizations", in *History of Intellectual Culture, Vol. 2: Modes of Production*, ed. Charlotte A. Lerg, Johan Östling and Jana Weiß (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2023), 71–6.

The indefinite subject of intellectual cooperation: a challenge for defining the target audience

While the League's Secretariat initially rejected recognition of the Bolshevik government,[3] the League's newly created Medical Section pioneered cooperation in epidemic control and hunger relief, arguing that a medical catastrophe on the eastern border of the League's member states was a severe risk for the whole continent, and thus should be tackled, not ignored.[4] The High Commission for Refugees came into life out of the necessity to accommodate the massive influx of refugees fleeing the collapsed Russian empire, but also prisoners of war and otherwise displaced persons who were, after the First World War, scattered across Europe and the Near East and had no state to return to.[5]

In the case of the former parts of the Russian Empire, the League faced a distinct challenge. For one, the considerable amount of prisoners of war could not be, as elsewhere, exchanged and sent back home but had to linger where they were situated at the cessation of hostilities.[6] Additionally, a massive wave of often well-qualified and occasionally aristocratic émigrés emerged as educated strata fled the threat of elimination by the Bolshevik regime. Yet other intellectuals from the former empire did not move at all: they became stateless and often unwelcome in newly independent states. In several cases, the League received requests to support former medical practitioners who suddenly found themselves residing in states such as Estonia as well as former prisoners of war who found themselves abroad and unable to earn a living due to the lack of locally acknowledged licenses.

On numerous occasions, the High Commissioner for Refugees and the League's Political Section circulated letters by stranded and impoverished intellectuals who struggled in legal precarity with no residence or employment permits, stuck between states and with no state of their own to support their existence. Exemplifying this financial and legal precarity, a group of refugee intellectuals in Lausanne appealed to the League's Secretary-General Eric Drummond in summer 1921, seeking the League's engagement on their behalf: four women with adolescent children and a married couple, among them Nathalie Loguinow [sic], a pianist by training; the historian and artist Sophie Egoroff; Marie Loguinoff, a law graduate;[7] and Leon Roubach, a college student.[8] Owing to

[3] The scholarship on the matter is extremely rich. See, for example, recent scholarship discussing the question of international law vis-à-vis revolutions: Alison Duxbury, "Excluding Revolutionary States: Mexico, Russia and the League of Nations", in *Revolutions in International Law: The Legacies of 1917*, ed. Kathryn Greenman, Anne Orford, Anna Saunders and Ntina Tzouvala (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 85–111. For the deliberate Soviet rejection to cooperate with the League based on its own, alternative internationalist project, see Vsevolod Kritskiy, "The Communist International: A Party of Parties Confronting Interwar Internationalisms, 1920–1925", in *Parties as Governments in Eurasia, 1913–1991*, ed. Ivan Sablin and Egas Moniz Bandeira (London: Routledge, 2022), 60–84.

[4] For medical cooperation, see Susan Gross Solomon, "'Through a Glass Darkly': The Rockefeller Foundation's International Health Board and Soviet Public Health", *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science. Part C, Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 31, no. 3 (2000): 409–18.

[5] Bruno Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism 1918–1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[6] Nick Baron and Peter Gatrell, eds, *Homelands: War, Population and Statehood in Eastern Europe and Russia, 1918–1924* (London: Anthem Press, 2004); Peter Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 53–84.

[7] It is highly probably that Marie and Nathalie were related, given the difference in their surnames is a result of different transliteration conventions. An informed guess here suggests that Nathalie may have gained her documents via a German intermediary running through a German-speaking officials on her way to the documents.

[8] "Appel d'un groupe de réfugiés russes à la Société des Nations", 23 July 1921, United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R1724/45/14205/13953.

the League's preference for not engaging with individual refugee cases,[9] the group received a polite response, advising them on organizations and contacts in the area of refugee relief.[10] Léon Bourgeois – president of the Senate of the French Republic and a founding figure of the League – addressed Secretary-General Eric Drummond on this issue. Bourgeois expressed the opinion that the League should pay additional and explicit attention to the unhappy lot of intellectuals who remained within the former empire and were now facing both internal animosities from the Bolshevik government and international isolation due to this regime.[11]

This points to the challenges of defining the target group the ICIC would connect to and intervene on behalf of. In fact, the very demonym "Russian" must be interrogated, too. Throughout the chapter, I speak of Soviet or former-imperial intellectuals, which occasionally demands wordier constructions but at times restates the argument advanced by the tedious tradition of scholarship that conflates the terms "Soviet" and "Russian" and that overextends the ethnonym "Russian", thus effectively erasing the highly complex cultural composition of the region.

With regard to recognizing the cultural diversity of former imperial "Russians", the League revealed a surprising degree of open-mindedness, although with a clear East–West disparity bias so typical of interwar internationalism.[12] Representatives of the League, including the experts of the ICIC, unequivocally recognized the Baltic states and never failed to denote these newly independent and internationally highly engaged nations by their proper names.[13] Ukrainian political activists, appealing to the League and affirming their nationhood or their enmity to Soviet Russia, as well as Ukrainian intellectuals forming unions, for instance in Prague, would not be confused with Russian émigrés either.[14] However, the League rather passively protocolled the Bolshevik regime, gradually annihilating Eastern Ukraine and turning it Soviet. The same arguably imperial continuity is traceable for Georgians or Armenians as (at part) "belonging" to the now-Soviet state.[15] The situation was rather hopeless for the pan-Turkic movement for decolonization and independence in Central Asia (Asia Minor), which, in the League's eyes, largely fell under one umbrella term of "Soviet Muslims".[16]

As noted, there were roughly three stages the intellectual cooperation with the interwar Soviet state ran through: from setting its heart with the anti-Bolshevist diaspora over attempts at intellectual relief to those who stayed and to cooperation with the Soviet cadre, the state-approved intellectuals and governmentally supervised institutions.

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9 There was a somewhat heated debate on this matter when the Refugee Commission set to produce a census of refugee imperial subjects stranded across the world. See e.g. Letter from Edouard Frick, Deputy High Commissioner, to Henri Reymond, 30 November 1921, UNAG, R1733/45/19357/16404.

10 Response to the former, in the same folder, signed in representation of the Secretary-General, 26 July 1921.

11 Letter from Leon Bourgeois to Eric Drummond, 7 July 1921, UNAG, R1724/45/12953/13953.

12 Klaas Dykmann, "How International was the Secretariat of the League of Nations?", *The International History Review 37*, no. 4 (2015): 721–44. Consider also the data prepared by Haakon A. Ikonomou, Yuan Chen, Obaida Hanteer and Jonas Tilsted "Visualizing the League of Nations Secretariat – a Digital Research Tool", 2023, available at https://visualeague-researchtool.com/ (last accessed 3 February 2025).

13 On Lithuanian relations with the League, see Monika Šipelytė's chapter in the present book.

14 See the folder "La vie intellectuelle en Ukraine. Demande d'assistance par le Comité de l'Émigration ukrainienne à Prague", 1923, UNAG, R1057/13C/29433/29433.

15 E.g. Folder "USSR – Situation in Armenia", 1934, UNAG, R3630/1/14052/2692.

16 Or "musulmans de la Russie d`Europe et de la Sibérie", as in the League of Nations folder with that name (1920), UNAG, R585/11/9392/9392.

Who were these intellectuals that the ICIC defined as their target audience and sought to address, engage in conversation, exchange publications with and invite to its discussions on copyright protection or its cinematography and popular culture conferences? Who constituted this diverse yet roughly coherent collective representing and speaking on behalf of a considerable scholarly community speaking and publishing its research and creative output in the Russian language? Who was the authority to appeal to when seeking to lobby, politically strategic decisions on behalf of intellectuals and their chances to participate in international cooperation? Throughout the two interwar decades, "correct" answers to these questions changed several times, making it necessary for the ICIC to adapt to the changing political reality beyond and within the Soviet state.

The refugee scholar: the ICIC and stranded intellectuals

If any chronological categorization of approaches is possible for the League's (and subsequently also the ICIC's) treatment of Russian intellectuals, it is reasonable to start with the refugees. The League and its offices, evolving parallel to the drama of newly stateless scholars, watched the gradually failing struggle of greatly diverse anti-communist powers with considerable sympathy. As imperial refugees fled from the Bolsheviks, they additionally mixed with the prisoners of the Great War that dwelled in Europe and the Near East with effectively no state to return or be forcibly returned to. The League supervised the repatriation of prisoners of war and pioneered, although not all too happily, interstate cooperation with the Communist government.[17]

The empire's intellectuals – artists, scholars, students and professionals of all trades – found themselves in a moral, political and practical quandary.[18] The decision to emigrate might have been the only possible option for some, while ethically unacceptable for others, contributing to inner-societal fragmentation. For those leaving, however, the new postwar reality posed a series of bureaucratic hindrances formerly unseen. The new, and far stricter, border regimes that emerged after the First World War made intellectuals from the former Russian empire vulnerable; their travelling and residence were restricted just as much as their access to opportunities for legal employment.[19] In 1921, the delegate of the Russian Red Cross Society in Geneva appealed to Fridtjof Nansen, the League's High Commissioner for Refugees,[20] asking on behalf of Russian medical and refugees residing in London that these be legally allowed to practice at least within the refugee community.[21]

Individual emigrants belonging to intellectual occupations and stranded across Europe in often rather precarious legal and economic conditions also appealed directly to the League's Secretariat. In 1921, pleas for assistance might have been encountered with sympathy but with rather limited readiness and, arguably, little practical inventory to provide this microlevel assistance and relief.

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17 "Delegation in Austria (Vienna). Repatriation of Russian refugees from Austria: transit through Poland, several transportation – correspondence lists of repatriates. N7, 1921–1925", 93, UNAG, C1285/181/7.

18 Stefan Wiederkehr, *Die eurasische Bewegung: Wissenschaft und Politik in der russischen Emigration der Zwischenkriegszeit und im postsowjetischen Russland* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2007). See also Sergei V. Karpenko, ed., *Meždu Rossiej I Stalinym: Rossijskaja èmigracija I Vtoraja Mirovaja Vojna* [Between Russia and Stalin: Russian Emigration and the Second World War] (Moscow: RGGU, 2004).

19 On these border regimes, see Christopher Szabla, "Peace (Re)settlement: The Treaty of Versailles and the Reshaping of Global Migration Governance", in *The Making of a World Order: Global Historical Perspectives on the Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles*, ed. Albert Wu and Stephen W. Sawyer (Abingdon: Routledge, 2024), 199–217.

20 Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism*, 138–9.

21 Letter from Dr Georges Lodygensky to the Secretariat of the League of Nations, 12 September 1921, UNAG, R1728/45/15723/15723.

It was precisely in this spirit of a self-imposed, otherwise focused mission that the League pursued that appeals such as the aforementioned letter of Russian intellectuals from Lausanne were considered out of the mission task.[22]

However, institutional support and systematic representation of intellectual output in the Russian language by its speakers and culture-bearers came to be a matter of concern for the League's International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. The ICIC's early position was to define refugees and emigrants, rather than the gradually emerging Bolshevik educational and academic system, as their interlocutors. In this logic, the Committee engaged Nikolai Rubakin, a Russian lexicographer and a pre-war emigrant to Switzerland, to monitor Russian intellectual output and provide the committee with lists of the most relevant scholarly publications in his language. Rubakin held a unique position and was a valuable asset for the ICIC, both because of his intellectual expertise and his political flexibility: as a scholar, he had left the Russian empire in the aftermath of its 1905 Revolution, which allowed Bolsheviks to style him as a revolutionary struggler and one of their kin; at the same time Rubakin stayed in Switzerland after 1917, establishing and maintaining contacts with refugee intellectuals fleeing the Bolshevik coup.[23] With the gradually progressing recognition of the Soviet state through the League, the issue of transferring the responsibility for the compilation of lists of the most essential scholarly outputs in Russian became pressing by the end of the decade, as will be examined.

As was the case with Rubakin, the ICIC frequently drew on the expertise and opinions of occasionally and loosely involved intellectuals and, at times, exiled politicians. This kind of expert activity can be seen as a mixture of informed counselling and informational intelligence: for example, the Committee, as well as the League's Secretariat, made use of the knowledge, background and standing of Jean Efremoff. Efremoff boasted a long political career in the Imperial Duma and was a member of both the 1917 post-Tsarist Provisional Government and the Constituent Assembly against which the Bolsheviks revolted in the autumn of the same year.[24] After the revolution, Efremoff – installed and acknowledged as the Provisional Government's ambassador to Switzerland – offered his expertise and contact networks to the effective blockage of the Bolshevik government and the support of emigrant communities across Europe. Several other former Russian intellectuals shared their knowledge and sometimes entered the League's service. This was the case for Nokhem (Nahim) Sloutzki of the Disarmament Committee or Tamara Goetze, a shorthand typist employed at the League and a bearer of the Nansen refugee passport.[25] Jonathan Voges's chapter in the present volume discusses further examples of Russians who found temporary employment with the League's International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC).

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22 "Les Réfugiés Intellectuels Russes. Demande de secours d'un groupe de Réfugiés Intellectuels Russes actuellement à Genève dans la misère", 1921, UNAG, R1724/45/14205/13953.

23 On Rubakin, see Dina Gusejnova, "Embedded Cosmopolitanism: Tolstoyan and Goethean Ideas of World Literature during the Two World Wars", in *Negative Cosmopolitanism: Cultures and Politics of World Citizenship after Globalization*, ed. Eddy Kent and Terri Tomsy (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2017), 217–42, especially 232–5.

24 See also Daniel Laqua, "Internationalism and Nationalism in the League of Nations' Work for Intellectual Cooperation", in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2018), 59–85, 73.

25 During her employment, Goetze became involved in an unpleasant, and documented, incident as a landlord complained to the League demanding that she pay off the rent debt her mother Nadine accumulated from 1917 to 1919 and could not repay herself. The League offered Goetze sympathetic but unofficial advice while withdrawing from any statement on her behalf (UNAG, R1282/19/28965/28965).

The changing tides of international politics made it somewhat unpredictable as to whether Soviet Russia would be recognized as a legitimate political partner on the state level. This uncertainty was reflected in the communication between the ICIC officers and Russian émigré scholars. For example, the ICIC's early sessions featured Peter Struve, a professor of law and an emigrant residing in Prague, where he headed a Committee for Intellectual Cooperation that was composed of Russian emigrants.[26] This body claimed to be the rightful point of contact for the League. However, a brief debate on the naming allows us to glimpse a tangible ambivalence with which the ICIC approached this symbolic representation. In the summer of 1923, the ICIC adopted a resolution recognizing this Prague formation.[27] However, handwritten corrections upon the resolution draft reveal subtle changes in the wording. The initial version ran:

> The Committee of Intellectual Co-Operation will establish relations with the Office of the Academic Union at Prague and will invite it to set up or to become a National Russian Committee of Intellectual Co-operation, similar to those which have already been formed in Austria, Hungary, Poland, etc […] The intellectuals among the Russian emigrants will thus enjoy the advantages which the co-operative system will undoubtedly offer as soon as it is universally organised.

This wording suggests quite a direct equation and thus recognition of intellectual emigrants' right to speak on behalf of and represent the entirety of their community, split between those who left and those who were confined within the Bolshevik state, to be their national society. The handwritten corrections crossed out and added some words so that the first part of the statement in the final, published version of the resolution seemed less binding: "The Committee of Intellectual Co-Operation will establish relations with the Office of the Academic Union at Prague and invite it to set up or become a Committee of Intellectual Co-operation of Russian Refugees".[28]

The tone of initially unanimous rejection of the Bolshevik regime became milder. This, however, diminished the initial support and readiness to recognize the imperial emigration as a sort of government – and a society in exile. This, in part, had to do with the League's many technical committees increasingly engaging in cooperation with the Soviet government and the Secretariat acknowledging this government as factually existent and in charge of its state, even when viewing it as an ideological adversary.

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[26] ICIC, Minutes of the Third Session, 5–8 December 1923. UNAG, C/3/M/3/1924/XII. On Struve's engagement with international political, legal and most notably educational initiatives see, Daniel Laqua, "Educating Internationalists: The Context, Role and Legacies of the UIA's 'International University'", in *International Organizations and Global Civil Society: Histories of the Union of International Associations*, ed. Daniel Laqua, Wouter Van Acker and Christophe Verbruggen (London: Bloomsbury, 2019), 53–72.

[27] There is rich research on Prague as the centre of the interwar diasporic Russian culture. Consider among others, e.g. Irina Mchitarjan. "Prague as the Centre of Russian Educational Emigration: Czechoslovakia's Educational Policy for Russian Emigrants (1918–1938)", *Paedagogica Historica* 45, no. 3 (2009): 369–402. Also, more recently in Russian, Anastasia Kopřivová and Lukáš Babka, *Russkaja emigratsija v Prage (1918–1945) – putevoditel' / Ruská emigrace v Praze (1918–1945) – průvodce* [Russian Emigration in Prague (1918–1945 – Guide] (Prague: Národní knihovna České republik, Slovanská knihovna, 2022). For biographical focus, consider Dana Hašková et al. Osobnosti emigrace z území Ruské říše v meziválečném Československu [Personalities of Emigration from the Territory of the Russian Empire in Interwar Czechoslovakia] (Prague: Slovanský ústav AV ČR, Academia, 2023). Finally, consider Johnson's recontextualization of the well-established narrative of Czechoslovakia's exemplary engagement on behalf of Russian refugees, Sam Johnson, "'Communism in Russia Only Exists on Paper': Czechoslovakia and the Russian Refugee Crisis, 1919–1924", *Contemporary European History* 16, no. 3 (2007): 371–94.

[28] "Intellectual Russian Refugees – Committee on Intellectual Co-operation – Resolutions concerning the organisation of relief for the Intellectuals among the Russian emigrants, adopted by the Committee on August 1, 1923", UNAG, R1724/45/29932/13953.

The ICIC, which sought to position itself as removed from immediate political agendas, cooperated with governmental actors as it appealed to the well-being of its target group – the intellectuals. The early response of the League – and then, as it came into being, of the ICIC proper – mainly focused on intellectual refugees and conceived them as a sort of representative of their national cluster and of international cooperation. Like its mother organization, the ICIC was neither designed nor equipped for interventions of practical character – most often, it envisioned itself as a well-meaning overseer and a consultant to individual nations' endeavours or solicitor in their communication with each other.[29] Thus, criticizing the lack of active intervention on behalf of individual Russian – or any other – refugees would be unjust to the ICIC. It is not the lack of such smaller-scaled actions that is of interest here, but rather the ICIC's attempt to act apolitically, that is to ensure intellectual cooperation past ideological divides – with this attempt failing almost immediately because in defining itself vis-à-vis refugee intellectuals or those in Soviet Russia automatically meant taking sides.

This initial approach to only engage with those fleeing, and to only recognize them as the bearers of the intellectual culture with which one was to cooperate, might have been natural at the outset of the ICIC. However, given that it largely bracketed out the Soviet government as a dialogue party in principle, this approach evolved and gave way to a more complex, diplomatic stance. Acknowledging the complexity of the situation, it had to address another group of Russian intellectuals, too – namely those who decided against emigration and stayed within the confines of a now-Soviet state.

The remainder: relief and countering the intellectuals' cooperation

Alongside seeking to support and acknowledge intellectual refugees, the ICIC engaged in relief work for those scholars and students who had remained within the confines of the new communist state. The information flowed to the League through its non-Russian officers and emigrant experts such as Jean Efremoff and Nikolai Rubakin, but also through rather demonstrative actions of the early Bolshevik government.

These actions targeted a complete societal re-arrangement and included a set of drastic measures seeking to enhance the upward power potential of the formerly discriminated working class, while radically undermining the cultural capital, political rights and economic security of aristocracy, middle class and, pars pro toto, trained professionals and intellectuals largely belonging to the latter two classes.[30] The flow of governmental decrees between 1918 and 1920 abolished entrance exams for universities, but also all qualification graduate exams, notes and professional uniforms worn by undergraduates of some disciplines, dropped Latin tuition and gender-separated classes in secondary school, unified staff salaries, introduced a positively discriminating quota for students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds, and sought to effectively prohibit university training for representatives of the former intelligentsia. The first shock of reforms set intellectuals into deep

[29] A good example of this self-perception and functioning would be an attempted reform of history teaching across member nations for the ultimate goal of teaching the next generation in internationalist and peace-seeking spirit. See Ken Osborne, "Creating the "International Mind": The League of Nations Attempts to Reform History Teaching, 1920–1939", *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2016): 213–40.

[30] Evgenia Dolgova, *Rozhdenie sovetskoĭ nauki: Uchenye v 1920-1930e gody* [The Birth of Soviet Science: Scientists in the 1920s–1930s] (Moscow: RGGU, 2020).

poverty and triggered institutional resistance through strikes, to which the government responded by terminating financing, arrests and initiating the forced dissolution of resistant working groups and trade unions.[31] Countering the outward political pressure to break up the procedural composition and inner-group practices of qualification, and despite the governmental abolition of graduate examinations in these early years of the new rule, scholars engaged with clandestine doctoral rigorosa nonetheless (that – occasionally, although unacknowledged by the Soviet authorities – helped emigrating specialists to set foot in European academic communities).[32]

European Student Relief – a venture launched by the World's Student Christian Federation (WSCF) – and its subsequent incarnation as International Student Service maintained a lively correspondence with the ICIC throughout the decade, a regular topic of such circulation being relief of hunger, poverty and institutional impoverishment of newly Soviet students, scholars and educational and research facilities.[33] The war had a decisive impact upon the WSCF and its mission, triggered by four years of formerly cooperating students fighting each other in their national armies, and the restitution of peace, upon which charitable rather than moralist confessional activities were in dearest need. In this wider context, the collapsed Russian empire became one of the central areas of intervention for the WSCF.[34] In June 1922, European Student Relief presented to the ICIC an ingenious idea of how larger amounts of books could be donated, despite the increasingly tight censorship of the Bolshevik government, to support the functioning of universities.[35] Conrad Hoffmann, the Executive Secretary of European Student Relief, suggested that fifty to a hundred matching sets of book compilations ("libraries") be donated after one pilot sample of such a library had been submitted to and accepted by the censors.[36] The success of such book donations is clear from the growing number of increasingly long and detailed lists by various, often smaller, universities across Soviet Russia, asking for reference literature, recent manuals they missed and journal issues, often from the years when circulation was disrupted by war.[37]

WSCF possessed a broad and remarkably effective network of autonomous member organizations providing relief and charity work across Soviet Russia. It maintained canteens that provided free meals to students, who were, through the government's prohibition of private commercial activity, no longer allowed to sustain themselves through jobs alongside their studies. Equally crucial, the established contacts of European Student Relief allowed for individual professors, but also whole university departments and universities proper, to compile and circulate to their peers outside of the communist realm pages and pages of books and periodicals dearly needed by local research libraries,

[31] K. V. Ivanov, "Novaia politika obrazovaniia v 1917–1922 godakh. Reforma vysshei shkoly" [New Politics in Education in the Years 1917–1922. High School Reform], in *Raspisanie peremen: Ocherki istorii obrazovatel'noĭ i nauchnoĭ politiki v Rossiĭskoĭ imperii — SSSR (konets 1880-kh –1930-e gody)* [Timetable of Changes: Review of Educational and Academic Policies in the Russian Empire – USSR (late 1880s–1930s)], ed. A. N. Dmitriev (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2012), 494–522.

[32] Dolgova, *Birth of Soviet Science*, 88–90.

[33] "Dossier concerning the Question of Collaboration between this Committee and International Student Service", 1927, UNAG, R1031/13/22761/14297.

[34] Isabella Löhr, *Globale Bildungsmobilität 1850–1930: Von der Bekehrung der Welt zur globalen studentischen Gemeinschaft* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2021), 210–60.

[35] Library donations and donations in laboratory equipment and reactives were a crucial part of post-war intellectual relief. Consider Tomás Irish, *Feeding the Mind: Humanitarianism and the Reconstruction of European Intellectual Life, 1919–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024).

[36] Letter from Conrad Hoffmann, Executive Secretary ESR, WSCF, to Inazō Nitobe, 6 June 1922, UNAG, R1031/13/22761/14297.

[37] Compilation of requests and lists, cf. Jackets 1, 3 and 4, "Supply of Books and Scientific Documents to Universities impoverished by the War. Dossier concerning Russia", UNAG, R1049/13C/21805/23815.

as well as chemical reagents, technical and sanitary equipment for laboratories both in the province, for example in Rostov or Saratov, and Moscow.[38]

The League's Committee for Intellectual Cooperation positioned itself as an information hub, a point of reference and institutional legitimation for various organizations carrying out the practical dimension of intellectual relief. Responding to an appeal from European Student Relief in 1922, Inazō Nitobe – the League's Under-Secretary General who was deeply involved in the intellectual cooperation activities – pointed at the Committee's inability to offer financial support, notwithstanding its interest in such efforts.[39] In the same vein, the ICIC relied upon the data provided by individual experts previously exemplified by Rubakin and Efremoff, who provided the committee with nuanced knowledge of the region, informational intelligence and analytical support.

Close cooperation and reliance upon the expertise of these organizational and individual players contributed to the ICIC's understanding of the state of affairs and state-led transformation of early Soviet academia and intellectual life. However, here, too the changing political tide and Western powers' broadening recognition of the Bolshevik government brought its correctives. Responding to this softening of stands, and in accordance with the prevailing spirit of disarmament and international peacekeeping, the League was slowly drifting towards peaceful cooperation with the Soviet government.[40] Gradually, this drift towards including Soviet players greatly impacted the ICIC's stance towards the Russian intellectual community and its choice of information. Whereas the experts from the anti-Bolshevik intellectual community in exile remained the central source of information for the Committee, and much interest was paid to surveying the relief work on scholars remaining in the Soviet Union, Soviet protest to this mode of (non-)representation started to reach the ears of the League's officials. In this way, the Soviet state-controlled voice entered the discourse on Russian intellectual life and its theoretical and practical whereabouts.

Welcoming the Soviet intellectual

The case of the Russian contribution to the *Enquiry into Conditions of Intellectual Life in Various Countries* – a survey based on a resolution of the League's Council in September 1922 – exemplifies this gradual drift.[41] The report concerning Russian intellectual life – compiled by the conservative Swiss ICIC member Gonzague de Reynold and published in the League of Nations series in early 1924 – unsurprisingly caused outrage in the Soviet state-surveilled press. The Russian part of the enquiry focused exclusively on non-communist emigrant/refugee intellectual unions, listing them across countries of most dense concentration: France, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Yugoslavia[42] and

[38] See, for example, a report enclosed to the letter by Conrad Hoffmann, Executive Secretary ESR, WSCF, to Inazō Nitobe, 29 September 1922, UNAG, R1049/13C/24805/23815.

[39] Letter from Inazō Nitobe to Conrad Hoffmann, 16 June 1922, UNAG, R1049/13C/21325/14297.

[40] It is worth considering in future research whether shifting attitudes towards the Soviets were also, in part, a response to the Bolsheviks' deliberate attempt at soft power diplomacy abroad. Early Soviet attempts at winning public sympathies in Western Europe and the USA are well traced by Michael David-Fox, *Showcasing the Great Experiment: Cultural Diplomacy and Western Visitors to The Soviet Union*, 1921–1941 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Consider also the rare view from within, as done by Pavel Ratmanov, *Sovetskoe zdravookhranenie na mezhdunarodnoĭ arene v1920—1940-kh gg.: mezhdu "miagkoĭ siloĭ" i propagandoĭ (Zapadnaia Evropa i SShA)* [Soviet Healthcare on the International Stage in the 1920s–1940s: Between "Soft Power" and Propaganda (Western Europe and the USA)] (Vladivostok: DVGMU, 2021).

[41] "The work of the Committee on Intellectual Co-Operation", Report by M. Hanotaux and Resolution adopted by the Council on September 13, 1922, Annex 417 A II/7 (C.650/1922/XII), UNAG, R1046/13C/23478/23024.

[42] At the time, the state was still known as the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

other smaller groups.[43] The Soviet newspaper *Izvestia* called the publication a "dirty pamphlet, redolent not only with hatred, but full of open slander of the working masses of the Soviet Union" and attacked de Reynold for "the most open and unconcealed hatred not only of Soviet Russia but of the February revolution".[44] What is particularly interesting is that the accusations against de Reynold, the League's Secretariat and the League's general raison d'être were registered and considered for further consolidated action by the League's Information Section.[45] Intense internal communication ensued, including different parts of the Secretariats as well as officials with relevant regional expertise, including the Polish director of the League's Health section, Ludwik Rajchman, and Gabrielle Radziwill, the Lithuanian princess whose career within the League is the subject of Monika Šipelytė's chapter in this volume.[46] William Rappard, the Swiss representative to the League Assembly, submitted his opinion that the affair of the Russian enquiry was harming the League both in intellectual and political circles. As a solution, he suggested a disclaimer be printed on all further "pamphlets of the Commission on Intellectual Co-operation".[47] The hostile reaction from within different offices testifies to the volatile environment for the ICIC's actions and opinions when it came to the subject of Russian – including Soviet – intellectuals.

Awareness of this uncertain, changing political context, as well as the growing recognition of the Soviet government, soon impacted the ICIC's established practices of information gathering. The 11th session of the ICIC, which took place in September 1929, saw a debate about the source of the ICIC's yearly lists of important scholarly publications by languages and countries.[48] Until then, this list, as we may recall, had been compiled and submitted by the socialist-minded, but Swiss-resident, Rubakin. However, by the end of the decade, the USSR, whilst still not a League member, was increasingly open to cooperation. The ICIC engaged in a vivid exchange of publications and events, invited or facilitated invitations of Soviet scholars to conventions of many affiliated organizations and unions in spheres of history, archaeology, geology, palaeontology, popular arts, cinema and many other areas. Following his participation at the League's Economic Conference in 1927, a Soviet expert in national economy and a diplomatic representative to various states throughout the decade, Valerian Obolensky (known by his pseudonym, Valerian Osinsky) became a focal point of interest to the ICIC and eventually joined it as a representative member after the USSR's admission to the League of Nations in 1934.[49]

The 11th session of the ICIC deliberated on their considerations regarding the list of scholarly publications. Rubakin's services were acknowledged to be beyond any reproach – and provided a bonus in that they included publications authored by scholars living in exile – precisely those against whose expertise and right to represent the intellectual community *Izvestia* had thundered four years prior.

43 "Enquête sur la situation du travail intellectuel. Deuxième Série. La vie intellectuelle dans les divers pays. Russie. Les Groupes académiques russes. Rapport sur la situation et l'organisation des intellectuels russes hors de Russie par G. de Reynold", 1924, UNAG, R1058/13C/33423/29604.

44 Memorandum by Konni Zilliacus, Information Section, 21 March 1924, UNAG, R1058/13C/33423/29604.

45 On the activities of the Information Section more broadly, see Pelle van Dijk's chapter in this volume.

46 The director of the Information Section, Pierre Comert, explicitly solicited Rajachman and Radziwill's views in terms of "an explanation for the Russian press", in a note from 7 April 1924, UNAG, R1058/13C/33423/29604.

47 William Rappard, a memo from 3 May 1924, UNAG, R1058/13C/33423/29604.

48 ICIC, Minutes of the Eleventh Session, 14 September 1929, 40–1, UNAG, C.342.M.121.1929.XII.

49 Osinsky was a self-chosen "party name" and then an official surname of Valerian Obolensky, his original surname providing too obvious a tie to his (passionately denied) aristocratic background.

However, a counterargument here pointed out that, twelve years into the new regime, the lion's share of scholarly publications in the Russian language originated from the USSR. Soviet officials gradually developed an affinity for international cooperation and approached the ICIC, suggesting that the State Book Department in Moscow compile future lists.[50] The committee considered it unwise to reject such a generous offer of cooperation but expressed unease in disposing of Rubakin's faultless expertise and aligning itself too closely with a player directly supervised by the state.

This proximity – or rather annihilation of the intellectual community and its institutions by the Soviet state – had been an ongoing concern of the committee, and it became increasingly so as the decade progressed. As noted, European Student Relief circulated, in conjunction with the ICIC, numerous lists of books and laboratory equipment which were in dire need in Russian universities. These lists reveal that requests for donations came from individual scholars, departments and whole universities with little to no obstruction or visible involvement of Soviet state actors. However, this was short-lived. Depending on the prominence of individual scholars or bigger state interest in pushing a certain expert convention or discipline forth, pockets of freedom for individual contacts survived well into the 1930s. Obolensky/Osinsky could travel freely, given his high rank with the Soviet government. Equally, a recognized status as an international celebrity in one's field might afford a scholar some degree of certainty that they could participate in international exchange with their peers with little interference from the state. Neurologist Ivan Pavlov, for example, enjoyed an unprecedented freedom to attend international events and received preferential treatment for his laboratory and staff at home.[51]

However, for intellectuals less closely affiliated with the Bolshevik regime than Osinsky, or less celebrated than Pavlov, the window of opportunity to reach out to the international community, travel to a peer convention with no delegation, order books, organize a conference or an exhibition at home became ever narrower.[52] Responding to a request by the Secretary General of the International Museums Office, Euripide Foundoukidis, to join a conference in Cairo in 1936, the Russian historian Igor Grabar mentioned the changed interface of intellectual cooperation abroad. All communication and contacts were to be organized by and supervised through the state-led committees.[53]

Epilogue: Osinsky as a "red" intellectual?

From the mid-1920s and through the 1930s, the ICIC witnessed the gradual consolidation of communist rule, its increasing ability to penetrate various domains of society, its growing effectiveness of governmental control over intellectual activities and the ongoing absorption of education, science and arts by the state machinery. The peak of its engagement with the target group of intellectual

50 ICIC, Minutes of the Eleventh Session, 14 September 1929, 41, UNAG, C.342.M.121.1929.XII.

51 For Pavlov's position within the early Soviet and international science and his action space in the Interwar USSR, see Daniel Todes, *Ivan Pavlov: A Russian Life in Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

52 Among scholarship addressing this growing state-induced isolation, Anton Yasnitsky has been working on the pattern of Stalinisation in Soviet psychology. See Anton Yasnitsky, "The Archetype of Soviet Psychology: From the Stalinism of the 1930s to the 'Stalinist Science' of Our Time", in Revisionist Revolution in Vygotsky Studies, ed. Anton Yasnitsky and René van der Veer (London: Routledge, 2016), 3–26. On Soviet attempts to remain internationally connected in the field of physiology and genetics, see Nikolai Krementsov, *International Science Between the World Wars: The Case of Genetics* (London: Routledge, 2005). I discuss the subject of totalitarian isolation of Soviet scholarship in Anastassiya Schacht, "Fractures Overseen: Soviet Medical Experts Splitting from the International Epistemic Community in the Interwar Period", *European Review of History* 31, no. 1 (2024): 75–89.

53 Letter from Igor Grabar to Euripide Foundikidis, 30 November 1935, Commission Internationale des Monuments Historiques, UNESCO Archives, C.I.M.XIV.65.-U.R.S.S.

refugees and emigrants passed, giving place to an avid interest in cooperation with what the magnitude of the Soviet state, its science and art had to offer. Valerian Osinsky, who by that time headed the History of Science and Technology Institute of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, became a Soviet representative on the ICIC in 1936.[54] Osinsky had been trained in the pre-1917 academic tradition as an intellectual, which presupposed that scholars communicated across borders.

From only recognizing refugees as representatives of the Russian intellectual community over the coordination of relief activities to those who stayed within the borders of the newly communist state and to cooperation with and through Soviet state officials, the ICIC went down a long and difficult path in searching for a new and different yardstick to identify and measure its "Russian" interlocutor(s). In a certain way, Osinsky symbolized this process. Trained in the old regime but serving the new one, he emerged as a welcomed alternative and a solution to the dilemmas facing the committee throughout the 1920s.[55] Fluent with practices of his social class, but unlike those fleeing the revolution and living in poverty and legal precarity scattered all across Europe, he was also unlike those fellow intellectuals who remained in what became the USSR and struggled with loss of social status, individual, institutional and profession-related poverty. Osinsky could offer the ICIC cooperation and partnership backed by funds and the political will of the new regime. Self-appointed into this emerging class of Soviet "proletarian intelligentsia", he shared opportunities for international cooperation and further privileges of this new class as well as its hardships.

As a staunch communist, Osinsky belonged to what later became described as the "old guard" of Bolsheviks, with the majority being reasonably well-trained and having first-hand experience of living abroad while installing a regime of tightly closed borders and political surveillance domestically after 1917. With Stalin's ascent to power in 1929, the old guard became increasingly torn by contradiction and rivalry for supremacy. One by one, they would be played out against each other, their connections abroad now being a ready-made reason to prompt accusations of disloyalty, espionage and high treason. As much as the citizens ruled by the government they designed and installed, internationally well-connected players in Osinsky's environment would be tried and sentenced in show trials.

Osinsky was arrested, then released and involved as a witness in one such show trial against his former comrades Nikolaï Bukharin and Alexei Rykov in 1937. At the time, his colleague in the diplomatic service, Vladimir Sokoline, stood for him in several meetings of the ICIC. However, the machine of Stalinist terror rarely reconsidered its elimination plans – Osinsky was arrested for a second time in early 1938.[56] Sentenced to capital punishment, he was shot in September of that year. Osinsky's career, as an intellectual and a politician, might have been unlike those of his fellow intellectuals, who fled the revolution and struggled with statelessness and gradually diminishing recognition abroad. It was, to a certain extent, also unlike that of his fellow intellectuals who stayed:

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54 Composition de la Commission de Coopération Intellectuelle. Rapport du Représentant de la France, 2, UNESCO Archives, C.194.1935.XII.

55 "Valerian Osinskiĭ: shtrikhi k portretu" in *Demoskop Weekly*, the digital version of the *Bulletin Naselenie i obshchestvo*, no. 343–4 (1–14 September 2008), available at https://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/2008/0343/nauka01.php (last accessed 6 September 2024).

56 Document "Vtoroj protokol doprosa učastnika antisovetskoj organizacii pravyh Osinskogo V. V. ot 15 fevralâ s.g., Zam. Narodnogo Komissara Vnutrennih del SSSR Frinovskij - Sekretarû CK VKP(b) tov. Stalinu [Second protocol of the interrogation of the member of the anti-Soviet organization of the right V. V. Osinsky from February 15 this year, Deputy People's Commissar of the Internal Affairs of the USSR Frinovsky – To the Secretary of the Central Committee of the VKP(b) Comrade Stalin]" in Russian State Archive of Sociopolitical History, F.17, Op.171, D.334.

few of them debated Stalin or represented the state he helped to create in international committees like the ICIC. It was, at the same time, still typical for his generation of Soviet, formerly Russian intellectuals, a career of dramatic turbulence and, as in many cases, one with a rather sad finale.

After the Second World War, the role of the USSR changed considerably. It was no longer the pariah state of the early 1920s, adversary and suspicious of the League and its diverse initiatives. Instead, the late Stalinist USSR sought to take a proactive role and engaged avidly in the establishment of the United Nations. At the same time, the late Stalinist regime continued to operate in a largely unchanged paradigm of limited international exchange under heavily controlled conditions and for narrow, clearly defined political motives. The plunge for international engagement hardly spread over to UN agencies with technical missions and no immediately visible gains for the Soviet government. The Soviet Union withdrew from the World Health Organization within a year of its creation, blaming the preferential treatment accorded to the United States.[57] With UNESCO, it took a further eight years and Stalin's death for the USSR to express its interest in joining.[58]

From this point onward, protagonists of international institutions no longer had any difficulty in identifying interlocutors for matters in the field of cultural and intellectual cooperation. What started with Soviet accession to the League in 1934 and Osinsky's brief affiliation with the ICIC became mainstream in postwar reality. This mainstream, however, was clearly no longer aiming at emigrant diasporic actors, nor individual intellectuals in the USSR in reaching out with their projects and initiatives. In the post-war and post-Stalinist USSR, only one kind of subject was deemed eligible to partake in international intellectual cooperation. The new Soviet scholar was meticulously selected based on perceived political loyalties and trustworthiness and was instructed to act accordingly. The era of individual intellectuals partaking in such quasi-official exchanges without formal affiliation was over.

[57] Marcos Cueto, Theodore M. Brown and Elizabeth Fee, *The World Health Organization: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 62–5.

[58] On Soviet engagement with UNESCO, see Louis Howard Porter, *Reds in Blue: UNESCO, World Governance, and the Soviet Internationalist Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023).

12

Modelling a Fascist Internationalism:
Italy's National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, 1924–1937

Benjamin G. Martin

The launch of an enquiry into "the conditions of intellectual life" since the Great War was among the first activities of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC) after its foundation in 1922. Beginning with Estonia in December 1922, intellectuals in several countries spontaneously created national committees to coordinate their responses, sometimes with (modest) government support. Responding positively to this development, the ICIC soon encouraged other countries to follow suit. National committees, the ICIC leadership argued, offered "a means, not only of interesting ever-widening intellectual circles in the League of Nations, but also, and in particular, of carrying out effective work with a view to promoting a better mutual understanding between peoples".[1]

Thus began what was to become a central element of the world of interwar intellectual cooperation: its network of national committees. Twelve had been founded already by the summer of 1923, thirty-three by 1928, and by 1937 forty such committees existed, including several representing countries that were not members of the League, not least the United States. After a first conference of national committees in Geneva in 1929 showed their collective power, the 1931 reform of the Intellectual Cooperation Organization (ICO) granted the national committees, as a group, new status as one of the pillars of the ICO. By the late 1930s, it looked to some as if the committees were poised to take over the leadership of the organization; after the Second World War, the structure they had pioneered influenced the creation of national committees in UNESCO.[2]

Among the largest and most active national committees was the one representing Mussolini's fascist dictatorship in Italy. Founded in 1924, Italy's committee was weak and inactive in its first years. But after being relaunched in a new form in 1928, the Italian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation (Commissione nazionale Italiana per la cooperazione intellettuale, CNI) became a busy centre of activity. It mobilized many of the country's most prominent intellectuals, writers, architects and composers in a wide range of projects, arranged major international events in Italy and coordinated Italian scholars' participation in hundreds of events abroad. This committee was only one of the ways in which Fascist Italy engaged with the world of international intellectual

[1] ICIC report, 15 August 1923, quoted in Gonzague de Reynold, "Preface", in *National Committees on Intellectual Co-Operation* (Geneva: Intellectual Cooperation Organisation, 1937), 7. See also Jan Kolasa, *International Intellectual Cooperation: The League Experience and the Beginnings of Unesco* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy, 1962), 25.

[2] Kolasa, *International Intellectual Cooperation*, 29–30; Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle, 1919–1946* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999), Chapter 7; Martin Grandjean, "The Paris/Geneva Divide: A Network Analysis of the Archives of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nation", in *Culture as Soft Power: Bridging Cultural Relations, Intellectual Cooperation, and Cultural Diplomacy*, ed. Elisabet Carbó-Catalan and Diana Roig-Sanz (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), 88–93.

cooperation. Between the mid-1920s and the end of 1937, when Italy withdrew from the League, the fascist dictatorship was active on the International Committee and in the leadership of the ICO, founded two international cooperation bodies – the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (which would become Unidroit after the Second World War) and a new International Educational Cinematographic Institute, both in Rome – and hosted several large-scale international events tied to institutions of intellectual cooperation, including a meeting of the International Studies Conference in Milan in 1933 and the Educational Cinematography Congress in Rome 1934.[3]

Aspects of Fascist Italy's activity in this sphere have been documented in several studies.[4] But the apparent irony of this activity continues to raise questions. How are we to understand why a regime characterized by violent ultranationalism dedicated so much time and effort to the project of international intellectual cooperation, the goals and values of which would seem to have been so distant from those declaimed in Mussolini's Italy? Italy's national committee offers an interesting case through which to explore this question, and not only because it is an aspect of Italy's engagement with intellectual cooperation about which relatively little is known.[5] Italian fascists invested particular energy in their national committee – with its fifty members, it was second only to France's in size – and they were eager to show it off. In a 1937 publication about the national committees, in which most countries presented themselves in entries of one to three pages, Italy's committee took up ten: presenting its nine thematic sub-committees, documenting its activities in fields from university relations to intellectual property to the arts and letters, and listing its many publications as well as its own monthly journal.[6] The scale of the committee's ambition means that the historical record of its activities – including its publications, documentation of its events, and a rich and largely unexplored body of archival material – offers helpful insight into the regime's relationship to the world of intellectual cooperation as a whole, revealing the common goals and approaches that linked the quite disparate fields within the sphere of international cooperation in which the Italians were involved.

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3 On these events, see International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, *A Record of a First International Study Conference on the State and Economic Life. With Special Reference to International Economic and Political Relations, Held at Milan on May 23–27, 1932* (Paris: International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, 1932); Jo-Anne Pemberton, *The Story of International Relations, Part Two* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 79–92; Joyce Goodman, "'Shaping the Mentality of Races and Especially of Young People': The League of Nations and the Educational Cinematography Congress, 1934", in *League of Nations: Histories, Legacies and Impact*, ed. Joy Damousi and Patricia O'Brien (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2018), 197–213; Christel Taillibert, *L'Institut international du cinématographe éducatif: Regards sur le rôle du cinéma éducatif dans la politique internationale du fascisme italien* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999).

4 Giulia Simone, "'A League of Minds'? Uses and Abuses of the League of Nations' Internationalism by Fascist Italy", *Journal of Modern Italian Studies* 28, 3 (2022), 259–77; Lorenzo Medici, *Dalla propaganda alla cooperazione: la diplomazia culturale italiana nel secondo dopoguerra (1944–1950)* (Padua: CEDAM, 2009), 59–64; Enrica Costa Bona, *L'Italia e la Società delle nazioni* (Padua: CEDAM, 2004); Maria Giuntella, *Cooperazione intellettuale ed educazione alla pace nell'Europa della Società delle nazioni* (Padua: CEDAM, 2001). On Italy's role in the League as a whole, see Elisabetta Tollardo, *Fascist Italy and the League of Nations, 1922–1935* (London: Palgrave, 2016).

5 For exceptions, see Stefano Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale. Diplomazia culturale e propaganda 1918–1943* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2005), 62; Giuntella, *Cooperazione intellettuale*, 53–4.

6 Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, *National Committees on Intellectual Co-Operation* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1937), 73–82. Other national committees were in more frequent contact with the IIIC, however. See Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle. La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, Université de Lausanne, 2018), 396.

Indeed, the very scale of the Italians' role in League activities was a cause for alarm among observers who questioned the motivations that lay behind it. In 1932, the Italian antifascist Silvio Trentin, living in exile in France, warned readers of the dangers of "fascism in Geneva". For while Mussolini's Italy conduct in League cooperation was "always irreproachable" in a technical sense, it was nonetheless clearly not in support of "the realization of the guiding principles" of the League's founding Covenant. Italy's strategy, he warned, was rather to "collaborate formally [...] in order better to be able to thwart the results".[7]

This chapter charts the history of the Italian committee from 1924 to 1937. The record of the CNI's activity reveals that the fascists used intellectual cooperation in three ways: to gain prestige, seeking to impress international elites with the "soft power" of Italian (high) culture; to improve Italy's position in the transnational networks of modern intellectual and cultural life; and to promote fascist ideology internationally, in particular by celebrating the innovations of fascist corporatism. The CNI's work shows that Trentin was surely right that the fascist regime sought to use their role in international intellectual cooperation to Italy's own national advantage. This approach was, however, by no means unique to Mussolini's regime. Historians have shown that many states exploited international intellectual cooperation for national gain, and indeed that the pursuit of national priorities marked the origins of intellectual cooperation in the first place.[8] Such scholarship suggests that internationalism and nationalism should be thought of less as opposites than as "twinned" ideologies that make sense only as a pair.[9]

Trentin's insistence that the fascists acted in bad faith, collaborating with League initiatives only in order "to thwart the results", conversely seems only partially correct. Under CNI coordination, Italians used networks of international intellectual cooperation to advance answers to some of the biggest questions with which intellectual cooperation was concerned: questions about the role of the intellectual in modern society and about how best to organize relations between the state, the nation and market forces in contemporary intellectual and cultural life.[10] But the statist, authoritarian answers the Italian fascists offered to these questions were aggressively illiberal. For Trentin, who like many others saw the League's internationalism as essentially, necessarily liberal in character, it was this ideological clash that seemed such a fateful and dangerous contradiction. But the story of Italy's CNI, and the international responses to it, suggest that the linkage between internationalism and liberal values was not quite as solid as Trentin hoped. Scholars have in recent years shown the wide range of ideological commitments that were compatible with internationalism, documenting not least the existence of what several historians have called "fascist internationalism", for example

7 Silvio Trentin, *Le fascisme a Genève* (Paris: Marcel Rivière, 1932), 7, 46.

8 Daniel Laqua, "Internationalism and Nationalism in the League of Nations' Work for Intellectual Cooperation", in *Internationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present*, ed. Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro (Cham: Palgrave, 2018), 59–85, 63; Christine Manigand, "Aux sources de la coopération culturelle internationale: Genève et l'aventure du Comité national français de coopération intellectuelle", in *Géopolitique de la culture: Espace d'identité, projections, coopération*, ed. François Roche (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2007), 65–80; Werner Scholz, "Frankreichs Rolle bei der Schaffung der Völkerbundkommission für Internationale Intellektuelle Zusammenarbeit 1919–1922", *Francia* 21, no. 3 (1994): 145–58.

9 Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), 3.

10 The importance of these questions to the project of interwar intellectual cooperation is documented in Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", Journal of Global History 6, no. 2 (2011): 223–47.

in the fields of cross-border agricultural and economic cooperation.[11] The case of the CNI allows us to explore the degree to which Italians also modelled a fascist internationalism in the sphere of intellectual cooperation.

Italy's committee between international outreach and state control

Italian officials first founded a national committee to participate in the League's work on intellectual cooperation in 1924. Giovanni Gentile, the philosopher and fascist ideologue who had been serving as minister of public instruction since Mussolini came to power in October 1922, built a national committee out of two existing institutions. One was the Italian Inter-University Institute (Istituto interuniversitario italiano), founded in March 1923 to promote "the increase of Italian culture and the knowledge of it in foreign nations", primarily by promoting university exchanges.[12] This body, the activity of which consisted mostly of Italian language courses for foreigners, was nominally autonomous from the Italian state, but it was led by Gentile and had been founded on the initiative of the head of the Foreign Ministry press office, Amedeo Giannini, who served as its vice president.[13] The second institution was the Leonardo Foundation for Italian Culture (Fondazione Leonardo). Similarly devoted to "la propaganda della cultura italiana", this body was formerly a private foundation that Gentile seized control over in 1923.[14]

Together, the two bodies fulfilled the functions of a national committee in the mid-1920s. Both organizations used the name "Comitato nazionale italiano per la cooperazione intellettuale per la Società delle Nazioni" (Italian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation for the League of Nations) in their publications, and Giannini represented Italy at university cooperation meetings hosted by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) in Paris in 1926 and 1927.[15] This awkward institutional arrangement did not make for a dynamic presence, however, and the committee at this stage existed largely on paper. It nonetheless reflected concern with intellectual cooperation at a high level in Mussolini's government.

In 1925 the regime revealed a growing interest in intellectual cooperation, and its desire to exercise control over Italy's role in it, when the Italian member of the ICIC in Geneva, the University of Turin law professor and prominent liberal Francesco Ruffini, was forced out of this position and replaced by Mussolini's new justice minister Alfredo Rocco. The fifty-year-old jurist and former university professor was a key intellectual architect of fascism's assault on the liberal state.[16] Ruffini's sudden ousting and replacement with a regime official provoked outrage in Geneva: ICIC members

[11] Philippa Hetherington and Glenda Sluga, "Liberal and Illiberal Internationalisms", *Journal of World History* 31, no. 1 (2020): 1–9; Madeleine Herren, "Fascist Internationalism", in *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History*, ed. Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 191–212; Jens Steffek, "Fascist Internationalism", *Millennium* 44, no. 1 (2015), 3–22.

[12] The Institute's 1925 yearbook, quoted in Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale*, 56–7.

[13] Guido Melis, "Giannini Amedeo," in *Dizionario biografio degli italiani*, vol. 54 (Rome: Treccani, 2000), available at https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/amedeo-giannini_(Dizionario-Biografico)/ (last accessed 3 February 2025).

[14] Santoro, *L'Italia e l'Europa orientale*, 60–1.

[15] The IICI's meetings of "directeurs des Offices universitaires nationaux" were held in Paris on 7–9 July 1926, and on 2–3 June 1927. See Istituto interuniversitario italiano, *Annuario dell'Istituto interuniversitario italiano, Comitato Nazionale italiano per la cooperazione intellettuale per la Società delle Nazioni. Anno 1926* (Rome: Istituto interuniversitario italiano, 1927), 15.

[16] Emilio Gentile, Fulco Lanchester, and Alessandra Tarquini, eds, *Alfredo Rocco: dalla crisi del parlamentarismo alla costruzione dello Stato nuovo* (Rome: Carocci, 2010); Giulia Simone, *Il guardasigilli del regime. L'itinerario politico e culturale di Alfredo Rocco* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2012).

Marie Skłodowska-Curie and Albert Einstein strongly opposed Rocco's nomination on the grounds that it politicized the realm of intellectual cooperation. They eventually backed down, partly in the face of the threat that Italy might withdraw from the organization altogether, but also because Ruffini himself implored his ICIC colleagues to accept Rocco, for the longer-term good of the institutions of international intellectual cooperation.[17] Rocco's appointment did not lead to any immediate change in Italy's National Committee, which maintained its double structure and its modest level of activity.

In the meantime, the role and importance of the national committees grew in the second half of the 1920s. Welcoming this development, the ICIC announced plans for a conference of national committees, to be held in Geneva in 1929, and in 1927 established guidelines outlining the committees' basic tasks. These guidelines contained some broad rules, for example that only one committee must exist per country. They took no position, however, on how each country's national committee should be organized, leaving the relationship between committees and state authorities undefined.[18]

Seemingly in response to these developments, Italy relaunched its national committee. In 1928, a new body, now called the "Commissione nazionale italiana per la cooperazione intellettuale" (Italian National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation), was legally founded as an *ente morale* (a form of registered non-profit).[19] Several countries created, or formalized, national committees around this time. But the CNI stood out for several reasons. One was the size of its membership, set by the committee's statues at fifty. Another was the prominence of its members. These constituted a "who's who" of prominent Italian intellectuals representing an uncommonly broad range of fields, from the natural and social sciences, literature and music to economics and the law.[20] Members of note included inventor and Nobel laureate Guglielmo Marconi, sociologist Corrado Gini, writers Luigi Pirandello and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, composers Pietro Mascagni and Ottorino Respighi, architect Marcello Piacentini and jurists Mariano d'Amelio, Vittorio Scialoja and Dionisio Anziolotti, who sat on the Permanent Court of International Justice. A third distinctive feature of Italy's committee was the prominent role of state officials. The committee's members included "the Directors-General of the Ministry of Public Instruction, the Director of the League of Nations Bureau in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Director-General for Civil Administration of the Ministry of the Interior […] in their official capacity".[21] In the 1930s, representatives of the Ministry of National Education and of the Press and Propaganda Ministry were added to this list.[22] Many countries had some governmental role in their national committees – France's included the chairmen of the education committees of the Chamber of Deputies and Senate, and representatives of the ministries of foreign affairs and of education and the fine arts – but most were semi-official or wholly private organizations.[23] Italy went

17 Kolasa, *International Intellectual Cooperation*, 38; Andrea Frangioni, *Francesco Ruffini: una biografia intellettuale* (Bologna: Mulino, 2017), 372, n. 50.

18 Reynold, "Preface", 7.

19 The committee was founded in this new form through Royal Decree – Law 1534, 14 June 1928, approved in the Chamber of Deputies on 28 November 1928, and made law 31 December 1928, n. 3432. *Gazzetta Ufficiale* 45, 22 February 1929, 874.

20 See list of members in *Les commissions nationales de coopération intellectuelle* (Geneva: Organisation internationale de coopération intellectuelle, 1932), 50–3.

21 Ibid., 50.

22 Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, *National Committees*, 73.

23 Ibid., 60. See also de Reynold, "Preface", 14; Manigand, "Aux sources de la cooperation culturelle internationale", 67–72.

perhaps the furthest of any in the direction of state control – a feature underlined not only by Rocco's leadership of the CNI but by the location of its offices: in the same grand *palazzo* as the Ministry of Justice in central Rome.

The prominent role of state officials in this committee, and in the delegation Italy sent to the Geneva conference of national committees in 1929, might have seemed out of keeping with the vision and values of international intellectual cooperation. But it was not in conflict with the guidelines, which did not stipulate that a national committee must (or even should) be a non-governmental body. The International Committee's lack of clarity on this point was typical of the way that interwar internationalism "blurred the difference between state-driven activities and the formation of an international civil society".[24] It meant that the way was open for Mussolini's regime to design a national committee that would increase Italy's participation in international intellectual networks, while strengthening the regime's control over which Italians could gain access to them. In June 1929, Rocco launched a "coordination committee" within the CNI tasked with mapping all cultural institutes in Italy that might have any international contacts, gaining the oversight needed for the CNI to be able to "coordinate" all organized cultural contacts between Italians and the outside world. By December, this committee's surveys and interviews had allowed it to identify over 300 institutions, documented in a card catalogue (*schedario*) that the CNI celebrated as "one of the most complete on this subject".[25] At the same time, the national committee's control over international cultural exchanges provided the fascist regime with a tool for limiting foreign influence in Italy, for example by scrutinizing all non-Italian materials to be used in Italian schools and universities, and for exercising surveillance over Italian scholars' contacts with foreigners.[26] The CNI also steered Italy's PEN Club, meaning that Italian participation even in that classically liberal non-governmental organization operated under the oversight of the regime.[27]

In 1931, the heavy-handedness of the fascist regime's statist approach to the organization of Italy's intellectual life provoked a crisis that shook the institutions of intellectual cooperation. The issue was the regime's demand that all of Italy's university professors swear an oath of loyalty. This elicited international outrage and demands that the institutions of intellectual cooperation take action.[28] The ICO opted, however, to maintain its strictly "apolitical" stance. Domestic matters of member states, including those directly related to the freedom of intellectuals, were deemed to be political, and thus outside of the ICIC's mandate (as France's foreign ministry reminded ICIC officials in a stern letter).[29] This insistence on the apolitical character of intellectual cooperation sharply limited the organization's ability to insist on principles deemed "political", even those related to intellectuals' life conditions. This delicate situation was not unique to the ICO: at the International Labour Organization (ILO), too, the Italians caused similar problems. At every meeting of the International Labour Conference from 1923 to 1935, workers' representatives from several countries sought to block Italy's delegates, arguing that state-appointed officials from "a country in which trade union

24 Herren, "Fascist Internationalism", 192.

25 "Comitato di coordinamento per gli enti e le istituzioni nazionali che interessano la cooperazione intellettuale", 12 December 1929, Archivio storico Ministero degli Esteri (ASMAE), Ufficio Società delle Nazioni (hereafter USdN), busta (b.) 132.

26 Phillip Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso. Fascismo e mass media* (Rome and Bari: Laterza, 1975), 49; Medici, *Dalla propaganda alla cooperazione*, 61.

27 "Organizzazione di un centro italiano dei 'PEN Clubs'", *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (January–May 1935), 205–7.

28 Simone, "League of Minds", 11–13.

29 Quoted in Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée*, 121.

freedom had been lost" were necessarily illegitimate. But every year, these protests failed. The ILO's leadership judged that the principle of inclusion was more important even than the principle of workers' rights to an autonomous organization.[30] This way of thinking, at the ILO and in the organs of international intellectual cooperation, allowed Italian fascists to use forums of international cooperation, founded on liberal principles, as platforms from which to present their own illiberal solutions to the crises of the age.

Cultural prestige and corporatist ideology: the committee's events

In its reorganized form, Italy's national committee pursued its goals through a busy schedule of activity, beginning with a formal inaugural session in Rome's Palazzo Corsini on 8 April 1929, attended by IIIC president Julien Luchaire.[31] One area of focus was coordinating the participation of Italian intellectuals in conferences abroad. By 1935, the CNI boasted of having overseen Italy's participation in no fewer than 108 international meetings, congresses and conferences.[32] The committee also organized a range of activities within Italy's borders, including language courses, student exchanges and, most spectacularly, a series of high-profile international events, coordinated with the key intellectual cooperation organizations in multiple fields. The CNI arranged for the International Commission of Folk Art to hold its 1929 conference in Rome, and worked with the International Museums Office to bring an important international art conference to the city in 1930.[33] In 1932, the CNI played host when the International Studies Conference organized a major international meeting on "the State and Economic Life" in Milan.[34] The CNI helped coordinate in April 1933 when nearly 950 jurists from twenty-three countries converged on Palermo for the Third International Congress for the Unification of Penal Law, and supported Italy's own International Educational Cinematographic Institute when it brought 419 delegates from 45 countries to the Educational Cinematography Congress in Rome in April 1934.[35] In July of the same year, CNI officials were in Venice to coordinate the Third International Conference of the International Committee of Arts and Letters of the League of Nations, devoted to the double theme "Art and Reality; Art and the State".[36]

Through these activities, the CNI sought to raise Italy's profile in the international networks that had become such an important part of cultural and intellectual life since the late nineteenth century. As foreign ministry officials explained to Mussolini in a 1933 memo calling for more resources for the committee, international cultural conferences brought together "those who form the elites of the nations and guide their public opinion". Such events offered great opportunities for "the affirmation of fascist principles". As it was, however, "many, perhaps the majority of such occasions,

30 Stefano Gallo, "Dictatorship and International Organizations: The ILO as a 'Test Ground' for Fascism", in *Globalizing Social Rights: The International Labour Organization and Beyond*, ed. Sandrine Kott and Joëlle Droux (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2013), 155.

31 For photographs of this meeting, see: Luce Archivo, 1929, A000094990–93, available at https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL0000025248/12/ (last accessed 31 January 2025).

32 *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (January–May 1935), 53 and 276.

33 Intellectual Co-operation Organisation, *National Committees*, 79–80; Marco Cardinali, "Technical Art History and the First Conference on the Scientific Analysis of Works of Art (Rome, 1930)", *History of Humanities* 2, no. 1 (2017): 221–43.

34 IIIC, *A Record of a First International Studies Conference*, xvii.

35 *Troisieme congres international du droit penal: Palerme, 3–8 avril 1933. Actes du congres, publiés par les soins de la Commission nationale italienne de cooperation intellectuelle* (Rome: Poligrafico dello Stato, 1935); *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (1935), 109–17; Goodman, "'Shaping the Mentality of Races'"; Taillibert, *L'Institut international du cinématographe éducatif*, 254–6.

36 International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, *L'art et la réalité; l'art et l'état*, Entretiens 4 (Paris: Société des Nations, Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1935); "Il convegno internazionale d'arte di Venezia", *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1 (1935): 194–200.

are unfortunately lost for lack of appropriate organization". To remedy this problem, the foreign ministry brought the CNI more firmly under its control, converting it into "a specialized organ that occupies itself with this important and delicate sector", within and beyond Italy's borders.[37]

Bringing international events to Italy was of particular value. The committee's leaders seem to have been aware that, as the political scientist Robert Cox would later argue, a particular kind of power is afforded to the hosts of events where the rest of the world meets.[38] Hosting international gatherings of scholars, artists or jurists helped make Italian cities into the international centres that Italy's leadership believed they deserved to be. Each of these events was also an opportunity for Italy to deploy its own high cultural prestige as a form of soft power, exercising a mode of cultural diplomacy that was of increasing importance in the 1930s.[39] Guests were taken to local sights that emphasized the depth and richness of Italy's history and high cultural achievement. The topics of the International Studies Conference in 1932, for example, were decidedly modern and technical, but the CNI hosted the event in Milan's fifteenth-century Castello Sforzesco and offered its guests a vision of the city and environs that emphasized the aesthetic and aristocratic, including receptions at the luxurious headquarters of the exclusive social club Circolo del Giardino and an excursion to the picturesque islands of the Borromeo family in Lago Maggiore.[40] The 1933 penal law conference in Palermo featured an excursion to Taormina, where delegates were treated to a dance performance by toga-bearing young women in the city's ancient amphitheatre.[41]

At the same time, Italy's national committee systematically used intellectual cooperation activities, in and outside of Italy, to advance fascist ideology. A particular effort was made to introduce foreign audiences to the socio-political innovations of fascist corporatism. This was the social model, outlined in Italy's 1927 Charter of Labour (*Carta del lavoro*), in which sector-wide unions would bring together workers and employers under firm state control, supposedly replacing class conflict with productivity and national unity. Rocco had himself been a leading figure in the intellectual and legal development of what the regime proudly called *corporativismo*: a new "-ism" according to which productive units (*corporazioni*) would replace the atomistic individual as the basis of representation and rights. In the early 1930s, Italian fascists presented corporatism as a comprehensive ideology of modernity – corporatism, Mussolini declared in 1933, "surpasses socialism and surpasses liberalism, creat[ing] a new synthesis" – with the power to resolve many of the central conflicts of modern societies.[42] The Great Depression focused a good deal of international attention on Italy's model, which Italian officials happily cultivated, introducing fascist corporatism to readers across Europe and in the United States.[43]

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37 Servizio Istituti Internazionali, "Promemoria per S.E. il Ministro", undated [1933], ASMAE, USdN, b. 132, fascicolo (f.) "Pratiche relative alla Sede".

38 Robert W. Cox, "Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method", in *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations*, ed. Stephen Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 49–66.

39 Benjamin G. Martin and Elisabeth Marie Piller, "Cultural Diplomacy and Europe's Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919–1939: Introduction", *Contemporary European History* 30, no. 2 (2021): 149–63.

40 Organisation internationale de coopération intellectuelle, *Commissions nationales*, xviii.

41 See images in *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (1935), 112–13.

42 Benito Mussolini, "Discorso pronunciato al Consiglio Nazionale delle Corporazioni il 14 novembre 1933", in *Autobiografia del fascismo, Antologia di testi fascisti 1919–1945*, ed. Renzo de Felice (Turin: Einaudi, 2001), 340. Rocco's role in the development of corporatism is examined in Simone, *Il guardasigilli del regime*.

43 For example, Giuseppe Bottai, "Corporate State and N.R.A.", *Foreign Affairs* 13, no. 4 (1935): 612–24. On the international interest in fascist corporatism, see Matteo Pasetti, *L'Europa corporativa, Una storia trasnazionale tra le due guerre mondiali* (Bologna: Bologna University Press, 2016); António Costa Pinto, ed., *Corporatism and Fascism: The Corporatist Wave in Europe* (London: Routledge, 2017).

In the same spirit, Italy's national committee used intellectual cooperation events to seize this moment in the international spotlight. At the 1932 meeting of the International Studies Conference in Milan, the Italian delegation, led by Rocco, contrasted corporatism's ability to coordinate "all the forces and all the wills in the general interest" to liberalism, which had merely "given free rein to individual selfishness".[44] At the high point of his intervention, Rocco read into the record of the meeting a letter which confidently asserted the death of economic liberalism and called on the International Studies Conference to embrace and support the international transition toward a political-economic system dominated by an interventionist state, of the kind modelled by Fascist Italy.[45]

Similarly, the Italians used the 1934 *Entretien* meeting in Venice to advance the fascist vision of the role of the state in a field that was even closer to the heart of intellectual cooperation: the organization of intellectual and cultural life.[46] The place of intellectuals in society was a hotly debated issue in the interwar period and had been a major focus of the broader project of intellectual cooperation from the start. Much discussion focused on the notion of intellectuals and cultural producers as "intellectual workers", and on how this group might be organized both on the national and international level.[47] In this context, fascists presented Italy's corporatist organization of intellectuals and artists as a means not only to resolve practical issues, like unemployment and pensions, but also to address broader themes in the relationship between creative life, the nation and the state. In the sessions on the theme "Art and the State" in Venice, the Italian hosts extolled the benefits of the way Italy's state-led, corporatist artists' union had organized this social group. "The principle of the [artists'] union", Venice Biennale head and union commissar Antonio Maraini told the foreign guests, "is precisely to tie the artist to the life of the nation, and, so to say, to awaken in him the qualities of citizen and man". In this way, fascism's new social policy "will be able to have a practical result even in the creation of works [of art]".[48] In an upbeat note to Mussolini, Rocco reported that the conference had allowed the regime "to illustrate to the foreigners fascism's outstanding and ingenious realizations, showing them that what, abroad, is only an aspiration, is already in action in Italy with the most successful results: namely, the regulation of arts education and the [corporatist] syndicalist organization of professionals and artists". In other words, the event had been a resounding success, for "the pre-eminence assumed in the debates by Italian thought" and for the vision it had presented to "intellectuals from twenty-five countries of the potency of Fascism".[49]

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44 Economist Luigi Amoroso, quoted in Jo-Anne Pemberton, *The Story of International Relations, Part Two* (Cham: Palgrave, 2019), 86.

45 Pemberton, *The Story of International Relations*, 86–7; Jan Stöckmann, *Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 195–6.

46 In outlining the Venice event to the foreign ministry, Rocco stressed its "political" character and explained that it, like other CNI initiatives, was designed to "valorize the Italian corporatist order". Rocco to Ministero Affari Esteri, 20 May 1934, in ASMAE, USdN, b. 133, f. "Convegno internazionale d'alta cultura su problemi artistici, Venezia 1934".

47 Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation", 241–6.

48 International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, *L'art et la réalité; l'art et l'état*, 239. See also Benjamin G. Martin, "Fascist Italy's Illiberal Cultural Networks: Culture, Corporatism and International Relations", in *Genealogie e geografie dell'anti-democrazia nella crisi europea degli anni Trenta: Fascismi, corporativismi, laburismi*, ed. Laura Cerasi (Venice: Edizioni Ca' Foscari, 2019), 137–58.

49 Rocco to Mussolini, 19 August 1934, in ASMAE, USdN, b. 133, f. "Convegno internazionale d'alta cultura su problemi artistici, Venezia 1934".

In addition to proposing corporatism as offering national-level solutions that other countries could copy, Italian fascists also envisioned ways in which fascist statism could be applied to the sphere of international cooperation itself. This was the heart of the "fascist internationalism" articulated at the International Institute of Agriculture in Rome, and proposed by the Italian economist Giuseppe di Michelis in his 1935 book *World Reconstruction on Corporative Lines*.[50] With regard to international intellectual cooperation, Italy's national committee did not articulate an alternative, fascist-corporatist world model of this kind. At the same time, an ideological alternative to liberal internationalism was embodied in the form of the committee itself. Other countries entrusted their international cooperation to private actors, but, as CNI secretary general Giuseppe Righetti explained in a 1935 article, a country's image abroad had come to constitute "one of the essential factors of national power". This meant that "the solution to the problem cannot be left to private initiative". Instead, one should follow the current "orientation of political and economic life of states toward forms that are organized to a higher degree and [toward] internal structures that better respond to the interests of the collectivities", and embrace "the necessity for the state to care for and take greater account of" the country's cultural and intellectual "valorization" vis-à-vis the rest of the world.[51] In this sense, the centralizing and statist character of Italy's restructured national committee suggested an alternative, illiberal model: one in which the intellectual exchange among nations would be regulated and guided by authoritarian, interventionist states that refused to leave intellectual and cultural exchange to the desires of individuals or the whims of the market. It was in this spirit that Italy's committee also took a leading role in efforts to strengthen the position of the national committees as a group within the institutional context of the ICO.[52]

At the broadest level, fascist representatives used intellectual cooperation events to advance a particular vision of culture: one that emphasized nationalism over cosmopolitanism and statism over liberalism. "The contemporary period", Rocco declared at the 1932 Milan conference, was "the period of nationalities – that is, not only of political but also of cultural particularism".[53] The divisions caused by this particularism, he argued, should be overcome through international exchange, but not the particularism itself: each nation's cultural distinctiveness was itself to be valued and defended. This was the cultural-ideological context within which to understand his call for the international embrace of corporatism later at the same event. Only the authoritarian state, rather than liberalism's reign of "individual selfishness", could mount a credible defence of the nation's cultural particularity. The following year, at the *Entretien* meeting in Madrid in May 1933 on "The Future of Culture", Italy's representatives expanded on this point. Rejecting liberalism's concern with the freedom of the creative individual, philosopher Francesco Orestano argued that it was impossible to distinguish between individual, national and universal levels of cultural expression, since the individual inevitably expressed himself (and sometimes achieved universal relevance) through his national particularity. The mathematician Francesco Severi reinforced this nationalist principle –

[50] Giuseppe de Michelis, *World Reorganisation on Corporative Lines* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1935). On these topics, see Herren, "Fascist Internationalism", 203–5; Steffek, "Fascist Internationalism", 7–12; Maria-Rosa Marrero, "Notes sur la Société des Nations, les dictatures et la notion de corporativisme (1922–1939)", in *Korporativismus in den südeuropäischen Diktaturen*, ed. Aldo Mazzacane, Alessandro Somma and Michael Stolleis (Frankfurt/Main: Klostermann, 2005), 399–412; Fabrizio Amore Bianco, "Le corporazioni oltre lo Stato", in Cerasi, *Genealogie e geografie*, 241–59. De Michelis was himself active in the CNI, serving as chairman of its subcommittee on "economic and corparative relations": *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (January–May 1935), 81.

[51] Giuseppe Righetti, "Metodo", *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (January–May 1935), 50.

[52] Renoliet, *L'Unesco oubliée*, 95–104.

[53] International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, *A Record of a First International Study Conference*, 4.

he insisted that national character expressed itself even in a discipline like mathematics – and used it to argue for fascist statism. Because nations were the irreducible units of all culture, the modern state must be "the concrete expression of the Nation".[54] As the Charter of Labor had explained in 1927, "the Italian nation […] is a moral, political and economic unity, which is realized integrally within the Fascist State".[55] Back in Rome, Italy's national committee was pleased with its delegates' interventions: "Their contribution to the discussion served to orient the problem [of the conference] toward a conception of culture consonant with the spirit of the new Italy".[56]

"A new phase": competition and intensification after 1933

The CNI's promotion of fascist ideology reflected Mussolini's decision in 1930 to propose fascist ideology as holding "universal" solutions to the economic, political and social crises of the age.[57] That imperative only increased from 1933, when fascist leaders concluded that Italy must respond to the Nazis' rise to power and defend Italy's intellectual leadership among anti-liberals in Europe by raising the international profile of Italy and of fascist (as opposed to National Socialist) doctrine.[58] The perceived need to respond to the Nazis almost certainly accounts for the intensification of the CNI's work that took place after 1933. Having been brought more firmly under the wing of the foreign ministry in 1933, the CNI appointed a raft of new members in February 1935, all of whom represented government ministries. At the same moment, it launched new subcommittees that focused on ideological themes where it hoped to compete with the Germans, each led by prominent regime figures: a new section for "Economic and Corporate Relations" was led by Giuseppe de Michelis, while one on "Political and Social Relations" was headed by Giuseppe Bottai.

Announcing the Committee's expanded ambitions, in February 1935 Rocco sent Press and Propaganda Minister Galeazzo Ciano a press release about the CNI's recent changes for distribution to Italy's newspapers. Rocco hoped in this way to affirm the committee's status as the "body for the coordination of Italian culture with the [culture] of the most important countries in the world".[59] An additional sign of the CNI's new impetus was its decision to publish a journal. *Cooperazione intellettuale*, which appeared first in January 1935, celebrated the extraordinary number of events the CNI organized and offered detailed expositions of the committee's guiding philosophy. The committee, Rocco explained in the first issue, represented the application to the international sphere of fascism's embrace of collective organization over the rampant individualism of liberal societies. The power of Italy's national committee, Rocco wrote, was that it allowed Italy to speak internationally with one voice, coming into contact with the world "no longer only through isolated individuals […] but through the means of a unitary organization, better able to conquer for our country […] that high position of prestige in the field of the sciences, letters and the arts that she is owed for her past

54 International Institute of Intellectual Co-operation, *L'avenir de la culture*, Entretiens 2 (Paris: Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, 1933), 68, 235, 74. See also Laqua, "Internationalism and Nationalism", 69.

55 "La Carta del lavoro", in Alberto Aquarone, *L'organizzazione dello stato totalitario* (Turin: Einaudi, 1965), 477.

56 *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (1935), 193.

57 This transition is discussed in Giulia Albanese, "Non solo propaganda: il modello fascista all'estero (1922–35)", in *Il fascismo italiano: Storia e interpretazioni*, ed. Giulia Albanese (Rome: Carocci, 2021), 318–22. Also still useful on this topic: Beate Scholz, "Italienischer Faschismus als 'Exportartikel': Ideologische und organisatorische Ansätze zur Verbreitung des Faschismus im Ausland" (PhD thesis, Universität Trier, 2001).

58 Benedetta Garzarelli, *Parleremo al mondo intero: la propaganda del fascismo all'estero* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2004), 24–8, 34–6.

59 Rocco to Bottai, 20 February 1935, ASMAE, USdN, b. 132

greatness and her present works." In this way, Italy's strong national committee embodied fascism's totalitarian emphasis on "the action of the collective", which, for fascism, meant the state.[60]

Of course, 1935, the year the CNI launched its journal, was also the year that Italy invaded Ethiopia. The military attack generated an international crisis that ultimately led to Italy's alliance with Nazi Germany and exit from the League in November 1937. Indeed, as Mussolini moved closer to Hitler, the so-called "cultural axis" between Rome and Berlin took up some of the outward-directed energies that had been channelled by the national committee toward the world of League-sponsored intellectual cooperation.[61] The Rome-based International Educational Cinematographic Institute, for example, more or less ceased its activities in 1935, undermined by the Italians' decision that year to join the Nazi-led International Film Chamber.[62] Rocco's death in October 1935 deprived the CNI of its most powerful figure. Nonetheless, the committee maintained a high level of activity up to the end of 1937. In 1936, the committee continued to promote fascist corporatism, sending De Michelis to Madrid for the International Studies Conference in May 1936.[63] In 1937, an Italian delegation attended the International Conference on Excavations in Cairo in March, while the committee coordinated Italy's participation in the second International Conference on Comparative Law in the Hague in July and worked diligently with foreign counterparts to prepare an international convention on the repatriation of unlawfully moved cultural property through September.[64] If the type of activity was similar to the period before 1935, the mood was different. Rather than organizing major international events in Italy, the committee now developed targeted cultural-political outreach, supporting the Italian foreign ministry's attempted rapprochement with Paris through a set of "Franco-Italian Study Days" in January and June 1936.[65] The CNI likewise maintained its role in the *Index Translationum*, a global list of translations, coordinated by the IIIC in Paris since 1932, but not in quite the same way as earlier. "The activity of [Italy's] Committee", a May 1936 memorandum explained,

> has now entered into a new phase, inspired by the idea of studying the question principally from the point of view of Italian interests, and of advancing such agreements and measures that effectively favour the translation of our works into foreign languages and establish an audit [*controllo*] of the foreign works translated into Italian.[66]

The final international event in which the CNI participated was the second Conference of National Committees of Intellectual Cooperation, which met in Paris in July 1937. Italy's delegation consisted of only two men: the philosophy professor and former minister of national education Balbino Giuliano, who had taken over the leadership of the CNI after Rocco's death in 1935,

60 *Cooperazione intellettuale* 1–2 (May 1935), 15, 16.

61 Benjamin G. Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 44–73. See also Daniel Hedinger, *Die Achse 1919–1946: Berlin – Rom – Tokio* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2021).

62 Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture*, 67–73.

63 "Conferenza di alti studi internazionali", 13 May 1936, in ASMAE, USdN, b. 132.

64 "IIo Congresso internazionale di diritto comparator l'Aja – 1937", 13 May 1936, in ASMAE, USdN, b. 132. Discussion of the draft convention on cultural property is in ASMAE, USdN, b. 134. Italian participation in the Cairo conference is documented in "La conferenza internazionale sul regime degli scavi", *Cooperazione intellettuale*, 7–8 (1937), 9.

65 "Giornate di studio franco-italiane" (13 May 1936), in ASMAE, Ufficio SdN, b. 132. See also: *Cooperazione intellettuale*, 4–5 (1936), 9–16.

66 "Traduzioni" (13 May 1936), in ASMAE, Ufficio SdN, b. 132.

and the organization's secretary. But the Italians' small delegation belied the important role they continued to play. Giuliano had been among the main organizers of this event, and he gave an address there introducing one of its most important topics: the role of the national committees in the broader project of international intellectual cooperation. Giuliano used this address to repeat ideological points – about the centrality of the nation to modern cultural and intellectual life – that the Italians had been making for years. Each culture, he declared, "needs to be faithful to itself in order to progress" but needs also "contact and exchange with other cultures". This type of "contact" is what intellectual cooperation could offer. But the ideal of solidarity among peoples, he insisted, must not "enclose this true liberty" of each culture "in an abstract uniformity".[67] The freedom of each committee to determine its own form of organization was, in other words, a guarantee of the freedom (of states) against the liberals' supposed tendency toward demands for uniformity.

Given the political tensions of the late 1930s, it was natural that conference participants also debated, yet again, how to manage the role of "politics" in the world of intellectual cooperation. The conclusion was, as ever, that League-based intellectual cooperation must maintain the "pure intellectual point of view" so as to be able to act as a factor of unity against the tendency of politics to create division.[68] Giuliano, for his part, was already pointing past the League. He praised the success of recent direct exchanges among national committees, some of which Italy had led, conducted without going via Geneva or Paris.[69] In this way, Giuliano embraced an alternative, nation-to-nation mode of international intellectual and cultural cooperation – one that could function without the League. Bilateral forms of intellectual cooperation were not unusual. But in the context of Italy's new cultural partnership with Nazi Germany, Giuliano's support for such activities was a pointed reminder that cross-border intellectual cooperation could function just as well – or perhaps better? – between authoritarian states, outside of the League.[70] In what was effectively Italy's farewell to intellectual cooperation, then, the CNI's leader did not reject internationalism as such; he rejected the liberal, cosmopolitan model of internationalism associated with Geneva and Paris.

A transformation rather than an ending

In November 1937, Mussolini announced Italy's withdrawal from the League of Nations and all associated institutions. Italy's national committee was thus dissolved, but it did not simply disappear. Instead, it was converted into a new body: the Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations (Istituto per le relazioni culturali con l'estero).[71] This institution would pursue just the sort of state-to-state, inter-nationalist cultural exchange that Giuliano had outlined at Paris in July – the same model of exchange that guided the Italians' extensive cultural cooperation with Nazi Germany in the late 1930s and during the war.[72]

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67 Société des Nations, *Actes de la deuxième conférence générale des Commissions nationales de cooperation intellectuelle, Paris, du 5 au 9 juillet 1937* (Geneva: Société des Nations, 1938), 17.

68 Ibid., 57. Quoted in Kolasa, *International Intellectual Cooperation*, 61.

69 Société des Nations, *Deuxième conférence générale*, 20.

70 In the same spirit, Fascist Italy also developed the first bilateral treaties on cultural exchange. See Benjamin G. Martin, "The Birth of the Cultural Treaty in Europe's Age of Crisis", *Contemporary European History* 30, no. 2 (2021): 301–17.

71 Francesca Cavarocchi, *Avanguardie dello spirito: il fascismo e la propaganda culturale all'estero* (Rome: Carocci, 2010), 151–66.

72 Martin, *The Nazi-Fascist New Order for European Culture*, 113–23.

In pursuit of the so-called "New Order" in Europe alongside Hitler's Germany, the Italian regime would go on to develop a more sharply defined alternative model of cross-border cultural and intellectual exchange and cooperation – a proper "fascist internationalism" in the cultural and intellectual field – now articulated in open opposition to the liberal world order. The history of Italy's national committee shows that Italian fascists began modelling a fascist internationalism long before that, however. The CNI demonstrated how an authoritarian state could organize and discipline its intellectuals, and then steer their contact with the outside world, by making use of, rather than openly challenging, League-based networks of intellectual cooperation. Just as historical scholarship has shown that there have been many different internationalisms, the Italians' role makes clear that there were also multiple internationalisms *within* the sphere of intellectual cooperation. Illiberal and antidemocratic models of cross-border intellectual exchange are, in other words, no less a part of this history than the liberal visions on which we tend to prefer to focus our attention.[73]

[73] Related arguments are made in Ana Antić, Johanna Conterio and Dora Vargha, "Conclusion: Beyond Liberal Internationalism", *Contemporary European History* 25, no. 2 (2016): 359–71; Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, eds, *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo and José Pedro Monteiro, eds, I*nternationalism, Imperialism and the Formation of the Contemporary World: The Pasts of the Present* (Cham: Palgrave, 2018); and Hetherington and Sluga, "Liberal and Illiberal Internationalisms".

13

Beyond Representation:

The Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale and the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, 1933–39

Jennifer Y. Chang

Co-sponsored by China's Nationalist government and its representatives at the League of Nations, the Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale (Sino-International Library, or BSI) housed a diverse range of documents, visual materials and objects, including rare books, paintings, photographs, posters, film, musical instruments and ephemera. This chapter interprets the BSI as an early case of a "hybrid institutional complex" – at once legation, museum and sanctuary – in support of both multilateral diplomacy and wartime relief.[1] It highlights a transnational project that not only provided a base for launching Chinese cultural endeavours under the rubric of the League of Nations' International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (ICIC), but also sustained a network of distinguished venues in Geneva, Shanghai and New York to showcase China's emergence as a modern nation-state.

Based on the cooperation between the Republic of China's National Economic Council (NEC) and the ICIC, the BSI was established in Geneva in 1933, with the aim of promoting cooperation and exchange between China and the West. The BSI embodied the ideals of the internationalist faction within the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) that governed the Republic of China at the time. The individuals involved in these ventures not only sought to increase Chinese representation across various League committees, but also to enhance the country's international stature and ensure recognition within international forums.[2] Moving beyond questions about the League's effectiveness in conflict resolution and matters of collective security, this chapter elucidates how China's concern with its place in the world was not limited to the subject of Japanese aggression: it also spawned efforts by both the NEC and BSI to lobby international support for a modernization agenda that extended to the fields of education and culture. The fact that both the NEC and BSI were created with advice from League officials – based on the Nationalist government's request to facilitate technical cooperation – underscores a shared vision of connecting global economics and finance to peace and prosperity.[3]

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1 Kenneth W. Abbott and Benjamin Faude, "Hybrid Institutional Complexes in Global Governance", *The Review of International Organizations* 17 (2022): 263–91.

2 On the reportage of China's interest in joining the ICIC, see *Waijiao Gongbao* [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Bulletin] 27 (September 1923), 17. See also Chang Li, *Guoji hezuo zai zhongguo: guojilianmeng jiaose de kaocha, 1919–1946* [International Cooperation in China: A Study of the Role of the League of Nations, 1919–1946] (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1999), 36–44. Margarita Zanasi has profiled Nationalist Party internationalists leading the NEC such as T. V. Soong (1894–1971) and Wang Jingwei (1883–1944) who became BSI founding committee members in Margarita Zanasi, *Saving the Nation: Economic Modernity in Republican China* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

3 Donald A. Jordan, "China's National Economic Council and the League of Nations Experts, 1929–1937", in *As China Meets the World: China's Changing Position in the International Community*, ed. Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik, Agnes Schick-Chen and Sascha Klotzbuher (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2006), 127.

There are several reasons for reassessing the BSI's history and its relationship with the ICIC. First, past studies have tended to place greater emphasis on the limits of Chinese agency and representation at the League of Nations. Starting with the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, whereby control of the Shandong Peninsula was transferred to Japan from a defeated Germany, the prevailing narrative of China–League relations traces the series of diplomatic challenges that arose from bias and racial tensions at the League, from Japanese propaganda during the 1920s and 1930s, and from the League's failure to prevent Japan's invasion and occupation of Manchuria in 1931.[4] Second, the BSI serves as a gateway for tracing Republican China's support for internationalism more broadly, from the League of Nations to the United Nations. Third, historical documents and visual source materials previously unavailable to researchers have undergone the process of declassification and digitization in the last decade, thereby allowing exploration of Chinese content that was previously obscured.

While there has been revived interest in the history of the League and the ICIC, work on the BSI and China's role in intellectual cooperation abroad remains limited. Only two books have been published about the BSI, both of which are specifically concerned with the BSI's rare book collection, which was housed at the Biblioteca Nacional de Uruguay between 1951 and 1993.[5] Dedicated journal articles on the BSI are predominantly in Chinese and have been written by library science scholars, whose research concentrates on the BSI's publications and holdings.[6] Among them is Huang Yuan-chuan, who catalogued the majority of the BSI's collections in Montevideo in 1983 and returned to Uruguay a decade later to assist with the packing and shipment of BSI materials. Huang has provided a concise overview of the history of the BSI collection from Geneva, via Montevideo, to Taipei, serving as a guide for understanding the evolution of the BSI collection from 1933 to 1994.[7] The size of this collection amounted to around 100,000 items.[8] This tabulation is approximately fifty percent of the BSI's book collection, according to data published in the BSI 1936 catalogue.[9]

Li Chang has provided a detailed account of the collaborative endeavours launched by the Nationalist government and the ICIC.[10] This seminal work remains the key reference point for

[4] China's diplomatic setback at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference has been described as "A Dagger Pointed at the Heart of China", as a chapter title in Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2003), 322–44 puts it. See also Qi-hua Tang, *Chinese Diplomacy and the Paris Peace Conference*, trans. Zhonghu Yan (Singapore: Palgrave, 2020); and Alison Adcock Kaufman, "In Pursuit of Equality and Respect: China's Diplomacy and the League of Nations", *Modern China* 40, no. 6 (2014): 605–38. On Japanese hostility to the League at the time of the Manchurian Crisis, see Ian Nish, *Japan's Struggle with Internationalism: Japan, China, and the League of Nations, 1931–33* (London: K. Paul International, 1992).

[5] Yuan-chuan Huang, ed., *Catalogo de los libros chinos antiguos de la Biblioteca Sino-Internacional* (Taipei: National Central Library, 1984); Alfredo Alzugarat, *De la dinastia Qing a Luis Batlle Berres: la biblioteca china en Uruguay* (Montevideo: Biblioteca Nacional de Uruguay, 2014).

[6] For an article and internal research report by a librarian who has analysed these collections in Taipei, see Chen De-han, "Guojia tushuguan zhi jiaoxiangyue – guotu guancang wulagui zhongguo guoji tushuguan jingcui" [The "Reading Delights" of the National Central Library: Highlights from the National Central Library's Uruguay Sino-International Library Collection], *Guojia tushuguan guanxun* [National Central Library News Bulletin] 146 (2015): 27–30; Chen Dehan, *Zhongguo guoji tushuguan guancang qingyiqian jiuji tanxi* [Analysis of the Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Pre-Qing Collection] (Taipei: National Central Library, 2013). See also Qiang Lei and Gengsheng Tang, "Rineiwa zhongguo guoji tushuguan yu dongxi wenhua" [Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève and the *Orient et Occident*], *Tushu Zixun Xuekan* [Journal of Library and Information Studies] 13, no. 1 (2015): 135–61.

[7] Huang Yuan-chuan, "Zhongguo guoji tushuguan liushinian jianzhi" [Brief History of Sixty Years of the Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale], *Guoli zhongyang tushuguan guanxun* [National Central Library News Bulletin] 16, no. 3 (1994): 15–19.

[8] For an account from a member of the Biblioteca Nacional de Uruguay' s research department, see Alzugarat Alfredo, "La Biblioteca Nacional y la Guerra Fria: el episode de la Biblioteca China", *Revisita de la Biblioteca Nacional* 17 (2021): 297–318.

[9] *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève, 2ème édition, revue et augmentée* (Geneva: Imprimerie et Editions Union, 1936), 32.

[10] Chang, *Guoji hezuo zai zhongguo*, 49–50.

understanding China's League membership from the end of the First World War through to the creation of the United Nations, and discusses the BSI as an element of China's fruitful engagement with the ICIC, following the successful exchange of experts as part of technical cooperation in education in 1931–32. More recently, Kaiyi Li has covered Chinese involvement with technical cooperation in education and its relationship with cultural diplomacy.[11] Other texts have acknowledged the BSI within the context of broader League activities for intellectual cooperation.[12] Takashi Saikawa's comparative analysis of Japanese and Chinese engagement with the ICIC situates the BSI within Chinese cultural diplomacy and sees the BSI as an extension of the Chinese National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, which was formed in 1933.[13]

However, the BSI's inception can be traced to earlier technical cooperation between the ICIC and China, through projects proposed by the Republic of China's National Economic Council. Established in 1931, the NEC included leading figures from the Nationalist government. Senior League official Ludwik Rajchman attended the NEC's inaugural session in a non-voting capacity and later sat on the BSI's board.[14] Several NEC members became donors to the BSI; together, they represented over two-thirds of the BSI's governing body in 1934.[15] Moreover, two NEC members, T. V. Soong and Li Shizeng (Li Yuying), became key figures in the Chinese National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation.[16]

My characterization of the BSI as a predecessor of modern hybrid institutional complexes is based on its relationship to a network of key officials from the Nationalist government and the League's advisors who shared a common interest in China's integration into the world system within the framework of the League of Nations. By the late 1920s, China had been plagued by over seventy-five years of military humiliation and defeat. Persistent references to China as the "Sick Man of East Asia" in Western discourse were further complicated by the onslaught of anti-Chinese propaganda from Japan, both in the Chinese and foreign language press. In the face of this, the BSI was supposed to evolve into a platform for social and diplomatic networking. According to a BSI brochure from 1931, the institution offered a space to gather, connect, create and flourish as a "centre of studies and

11 Kaiyi Li, *Transnational Education between the League of Nations and China: The Interwar Period* (Cham: Palgrave, 2021); Kaiyi Li and Huimei Zhou, "The International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation and Chinese Cultural Diplomacy during the Interwar Period", *The International History Review* 46, no. 2 (2023): 158–75.

12 Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 223–47; Françoise Kreissler, "China-Europe: Transcontinental 'Intellectual Cooperation' during the Interwar Period", in *Modern China and the West*, ed. Peng Hsiao-yen and Isabelle Rabut (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 15–27.

13 Takashi Saikawa, "From Intellectual Co-operation to International Cultural Exchange: Japan and China in the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation of the League of Nations, 1922–1939" (PhD thesis, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, 2014); Takashi Saikawa, "Intellectual Entanglements Between the League of Nations and Eastern Asia: Modernism or Anti-Modernism?", in *East Asians in the League of Nations: Actors, Empires and Regions in Early Global Politics*, ed. Christopher R. Hughes and Hatsue Shinohara (Singapore: Palgrave, 2023), 101–20.

14 For Rajchman's presence at the NEC's first meeting – serving as a non-voting "representative of the League's Secretariat", see "Quanguo jingji weiyuanhui diyici weiyuan jiyao" [Minutes of the National Economic Council's First Committee Proceedings], 15 November 1931, in *Quanguo jingji weiyuanhui huiyilu* [Proceedings of the National Economic Council], vol. 1, ed. Zhongguo dier lishi danganguan [The Second Historical Archives of China] (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2005), 1.

15 *Zhongguo guoji tushuguan gaiyao* [BSI Overview] (Shanghai: 1934), 5.

16 In the "Statement on the Work of the Chinese National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation from June 1933 to May 1934" delivered to the Intellectual Cooperation Organization on 8 June 1934, Section III "Collaboration with Libraries" illustrated the interconnected nature of the BSI with the Chinese National Committee, as "most of the members of our Committee are also members of the Chinese delegation to the International Intellectual Co-operation Organisation", in "National Committees – China", United Nations Archives Geneva (UNAG), R3974/5B/5401/318.

research".[17] In 1934, the BSI established the Club Sino-International of Geneva with the objective of strengthening ties with the community and cosmopolitan elites of the city through activities such as receptions during the sessions of the League, which saw the participation of diplomats, scholars, writers and "the high officials of the League of Nations and the International Labour Office".[18] Within three years of its founding, not only was the BSI's mission as "a connecting link between the intellectual world of the West and China" realized, but its physical presence facilitated the forging of closer relations between China and the ICIC and, by extension, the League of Nations, in ways that went beyond what had initially been anticipated.[19]

This chapter reassesses the BSI's history, based on a wealth of sources, including various BSI collections in Taipei as well as ICIC records and other League of Nations documents held at the United Nations Library and Archives in Geneva. Such material is complemented by the papers of Nationalist government ministries and key officials conserved at the Archives of the Institute of Modern History at the Academia Sinica, the National Archives Administration (Taipei), the Hoover Institution Library and Archives at Stanford University and the Oral History Archives at Columbia University.

Representations of China and the case for intellectual cooperation

The BSI's imposing leatherbound guestbook shows that its first guests were almost exclusively China's highest-ranking diplomats of the Republican era. Among the many signatures and well-wishes from China's elite foreign service personnel is a horizontal line of large Chinese text written in traditional Chinese ink calligraphy near the top of the first page of the guestbook. It reads, "Intellectual cooperation is the foundation of world peace".[20] V. K. Wellington Koo, then the Chinese Minister-Plenipotentiary to France and a Chief Delegate of China's Delegation to the League of Nations, wrote the words "intellectual cooperation" as a double-entendre, especially for those who were familiar with the Chinese and/or Japanese languages.[21] In referencing "intellectual cooperation", Koo used the same Chinese characters as those used in the Chinese nomenclature of the ICIC, thus stressing China's decade-long recognition of the ICIC and its work for moral disarmament.[22]

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17 *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève* (Geneva: Kundig, 1934), 11. This passage was reprinted in the second edition of the BSI brochure published in 1936, *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève* (2nd edn), 15.

18 *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève* (2nd edn), 42; Anon., "Geneva's Bibliotheque [sic] Sino-Internationale", *The China Critic* 25, no. 13 (1939), 200.

19 W. Y. Chyne, *Handbook of Cultural Institutions in China* (Shanghai: Chinese National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, 1936), 35 and footnote 27.

20 Wellington Koo's entry to the guestbook was inscribed on 27 October 1933: see BSI Uruguay Collection (no. 019), Special Collections, National Central Library, Taipei.

21 On Koo's appointments, see "Waijiaobu zhuwai shiguan" [Ministry of Foreign Affairs Diplomatic Missions] and "Guoji lianghe (meng) hui quanquan daibiao" [League of Nations Plenipotentiary Representatives]" in *Guomin zhengfu zhiguan nianbiao (1925–1949)* [Offices and Personnel of Republican China: The Nationalist Era (1925–1949)], vol. 1, ed. Chang P'eng-yuan and Shen Huai-yu (Taipei: Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, 1987), 563 and 582. Koo's multiple positions representing the Nationalist government overseas during the 1930s are detailed in the V. K. Wellington Koo papers, 1906–1992, bulk 1931–1966, Collection ID: 4078997, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University.

22 Due to the publication of varying translations of foreign institution names and terminology concerning the League, the Nationalist government established an official revised translation of "intellectual cooperation" in 1940: Chang, *Guoji hezuo zai zhongguo*, 33.

However, in practice this relationship was subject to various tensions. At its foundation, the ICIC only included one scholar from Asia among its founding members, India's D. N. Bannerjea.[23] With no Chinese member on the ICIC until 1930, Koo and his colleagues deemed it crucial for China's national interests to gain as wide a representation within the League's committees as possible. As early as 1923, China's delegate to the Fourth Assembly of the League of Nations, Chao-Hsin Chu, called upon the League to shed its misconceptions of China and include China in its work:

> Some people sneer at China, simply because of her backwardness in scientific development. I consider scientific civilisation to be valuable, but spiritual civilisation is a necessity to a nation… Our door is wide open for the exchange of ideas and knowledge; for this reason I proposed […] that the work of intellection co-operation should cover the whole field of intellectualism, including that of my own country, China.[24]

Despite the efforts of Koo and his team of delegates who fought for China's place at the table in Geneva, China's image as a weak and politically unstable nation persisted throughout the interwar years. Western media reportage on League news concerning China remained sceptical, with certain press outlets being flagrantly racist and derisive toward the Nationalist regime, as shown in the mockery of the Chinese delegation and Chu's sparring with his European counterparts at the Eighth Session of the League's Advisory Commission on the Traffic in Opium in 1926:

> Having dozed or pondered while the foreign-devil-policeman spoke, slant-eyed delegates awoke to attention when Dr. Chao-Hsin Chu, Chinese Minister to Italy, made his contribution to the proceedings: "You insult my government and I am not afraid to insult yours!" […] [The British diplomat] Sir Malcolm Delevingne was far from smoothing matters over when he contemptuously refused to take offense, postulating instead an obvious truth: that "the Chinese delegates represent only themselves," because the new "Government of China" (TIME, Dec. 8, 1924, CHINA) exists merely as a puppet show whose wires are pulled by military adventurers.[25]

Facing significant political, economic and emotional pressures in Geneva, and operating with extremely limited financial support from their Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Chinese diplomats experienced frustration fighting the propaganda war in and outside the League – a situation that was exacerbated by their low and irregularly paid salaries.[26]

Moreover, China's willingness to accept the West's processes of institutionalization and internationalization of the concept of nationhood was the subject of debate among different political factions within the KMT. Since China's first foray in the First and Second Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907 respectively, inclusion in international conferences had failed to translate into either

[23] About the ICIC's composition and representativeness, see Martin Grandjean, "A Representative Organization? Ibero-American Networks in the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1939)", in *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-America*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Jaume Subirana (Abingdon: Routledge, 2020), 65–89.

[24] Comments in the plenary session of 27 September 1923, as recorded under "Intellectual Co-operation: Report of Fifth Committee", *Official Journal*, Special Supplement no. 13: *Records of the Fourth Assembly – Text of the Debates* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1923), 104.

[25] "The League of Nations: Poppy Pow-Wow", *Time*, 14 June 1926.

[26] Mona Yung-Ning Hoo, *Painting the Shadows: The Extraordinary Life of Victor Hoo* (London: Eldridge, 1988), 34–5.

parity or sovereignty.[27] In time, China came to see the advantages of multilateral diplomacy with the understanding that international organizations could provide a means to further dialogue if not to advance political and economic goals. However, the Nationalist government was only too cognizant that reliance on the League to fight the myriad of battles it faced internationally was insufficient, not the least of which were fierce anti-League criticism from fascist-leaning groups within the KMT that popularized an ultra-nationalistic rhetoric as well as the League's failure to resolve the issue of unequal treaties designed to undermine Chinese sovereignty and stop Japanese aggression in China.[28]

In the 1930s, Koo lent his renown and political gravitas to promoting the BSI as an alternative space for the lobbying of peace and security on behalf of China. Koo's high-profile endorsement of the BSI heralded the Nationalist government's fervent support for a Sino-Western institution devoted to international intellectual cooperation that was the first of its kind. Not even Japan, with its seasoned group of elite League representatives and reputation as a modernized peer nation of its European counterparts, attempted to establish a Europe-based, ICIC-aligned intellectual and cultural enterprise of this kind as part of its interwar foreign policy.[29] Koo's indelible stamp on the BSI's early history underscores his government's commitment to the concept of transnational intellectual cooperation and the League of Nations. As we shall see, the BSI's evolving functions reflected China's struggle for equal partnership in the construction of a post-Great War world order, but the institution also sought to solicit international support for China's nation-building agenda through industrialization and economic reforms, which included the category of public education.[30]

The ICIC and technical cooperation in China

The ICIC established numerous expert committees, including the Sub-Committee on Arts and Letters, the International Commission on Historical Monuments, the Committee of Scientific Advisers and the Committee of Library Experts, among many others. The intertwined history and destinies of the BSI and the ICIC in 1931 reflect the Nationalist government's economic and cultural diplomacy, with the ICIC serving initially as a strategic platform for Chinese attempts to seek international guidance for national reconstruction.[31] In August 1930, the ICIC's Twelfth Session approved the appointment of the Chinese philosopher, educationalist and linguist Wu Zhihui

[27] Ryan Martínez Mitchell, "China's Participation in the Second Hague Conference and the Concept of Equal Sovereignty in International Law", *Asian Journal of International Law* 11, no. 2 (2021): 351–71.

[28] Maggie Clinton, *Revolutionary Nativism: Fascism and Culture in China, 1925–1937* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2017).

[29] Prominent League officials from Japan working on matters concerning intellectual cooperation included Inazō Nitobe, director of the International Bureaux and Intellectual Cooperation Section of the League of Nations Secretariat from 1919–1927, and Ken Harada, who was Nitobe's personal assistant and continued to serve within the Secretariat from 1932 to 1938: Martin Grandjean, "The International Bureaux and Intellectual Cooperation Section", L*eague of Nations Secretariat Resource Guide*, UNOG Library Resources, available at https://libraryresources.unog.ch/LONSecretariat/intellectual (last accessed 16 March 2025) and personal file of Ken Harada, UNAG, S789/94/1614.

[30] *Quanguo jingji weiyuanhui diyici weiyuan jiyao* [Minutes of the National Economic Council's First Committee Proceedings], 15 November 1931, in *Quanguo jingji weiyuanhui huiyilu* [Proceedings of the National Economic Council], vol. 1, ed. Zhongguo dier lishi danganguan [The Second Historical Archives of China] (Guilin: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2005), 1–2 and 30.

[31] "Technical Cooperation between the League and China – Mission of Dr. Rajchman – Report – Examination by the Technical Sections", UNAG, R5721/50/11633/7263.

(Wu Jingheng) to the committee.[32] As an early revolutionary and social reformer, Wu commanded high political prestige within Nationalist circles. While he declined to hold any official government positions, he was an advisor to – and a close confidante of – Chiang Kai-shek. Moreover, Wu was also a member of the KMT Central Executive Committee at the time of the Northern Expedition (1926–28), the military campaign through which the Kuomintang sought to consolidate its control over Chinese territories. Wu's political connections along with his European educational background and his close links to Chinese advocates of educational reform meant that he was well equipped to serve on the ICIC[33] – even though his political commitments in China made it difficult for him to attend sessions in Geneva or Paris (he was absent from all 10 sessions during which he was appointed).[34] He became a co-founder of both the BSI and the Chinese National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation.

On the League's side, the complexities of geopolitics and global economic instability following the Wall Street Crash of 1929 and subsequent depression forced the Geneva institution to prioritize the exigencies of global capitalism.[35] The timing generated a key moment in the history of technical cooperation between the ICIC and the Nationalist government, bringing together international experts across cultures and disciplines, and allowing for information exchange and the creation of discrete institutions such as the BSI. By 1932, one year before the opening of the BSI, the extent to which the League bodies for intellectual cooperation sought to engage with questions of culture and moral disarmament on a global scale took on an economic and financial turn as the impact of the Great Depression fuelled international disunity.

The codification of technical cooperation by the League and its collaborative work with the NEC coincided with T. V. Soong's rise within the ranks of the Nationalist government. Soong's pragmatic concerns for China called for re-engagement with the West after almost a decade of political crises and turmoil from 1919 to the end of the Northern Expedition in 1928. Aided by his trusted advisor, Ludwik Rajchman, head of the League's Health section, Soong approached the League to assist in the establishment of the NEC and reached out to the ICIC and other League bodies to launch missions of exchange with China.[36] His aim was to gain assistance for China's reorganization

[32] "Appointment of Two New Members to the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation: Report by the French", 12 May 1930, UNAG, C.290-1930-XII_EN. Wu's name was documented as "Wu Shi-Fee" at the League of Nations. Wu was also known as C. H. Wood and Ou Tche-houei, as indicated by publications of the Institut Franco-Chinois de Lyon founded by his close collaborator, Li Yuying (Li Shizeng), "Services of and correspondence with a Chinese member (Mr. Wu Shi Fee)", UNAG, R2219/5B/5744/1397.

[33] On Wu, see "Wu Chih-hui", in *Biographical Dictionary of Republican China*, vol. 3, ed. Howard L. Boorman and Richard C. Howard (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 416–19; and Paul Gifford, "The Intellectual Development of Wu Zhihui: A Reflection of Society and Politics in Late Qing and Republican China" (PhD thesis, University of London, 1978).

[34] Martin Grandjean, "Les réseaux de la coopération intellectuelle: La Société des Nations comme actrice des échanges scientifiques et culturels dans l'entre-deux-guerres" (PhD thesis, University of Lausanne, 2018), 288.

[35] Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920–1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[36] "Extract from summary of deliberations of Economic Committee, Twenty-Fifth Session, Geneva, 18–22 June 1931. Document E, 723-Page 33, N. 17: Collaboration of Technical Organizations of the League of Nations in the Economic Reorganisation of China", in *The National Economic Council: The Opening Address Delivered at the First Meeting on November Fifteenth in the Twentieth Year of the Republic of China", 15 November 1931* (Nanking: The National Economic Council, 1931), 25, as contained within Arthur N. Young Papers, Box 116, Call Number 66005, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Stanford University.

of public instruction as part of NEC's agenda to strengthen the national economy and society.[37] The ICIC responded favourably to Soong and then took the first step in appointing an education mission of European experts to China within the scope of technical cooperation.[38]

Although Wu never attended any ICIC sessions in person throughout his tenure, he was a fervent proponent of ICIC initiatives in China and tirelessly solicited financial support from public and private sources to help establish the Chinese National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, which was co-organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in 1933.[39] Wu was unable to travel to Europe, for reasons summarized by Rajchman in February 1932. Answering a Geneva colleague, who had requested the presence of Wu or a replacement for an ICIC session that had been scheduled for July that year, Rajchman commented "that when the National Govt of China had to be transferred to the interior of the country and when every visit[ing] member of the Kuomintang and of the Govt is straining every nerve to defend the country against foreign invasion it would be cruel irony to ask whom they propose sending to Geneva in five months' time".[40] Indeed, at the time, the KMT relied on Wu to advise on preparatory actions for emergency relocation of institutions and people following the Manchurian crisis of 1931.[41] Rajchman himself was familiar with the Chinese situation, having worked closely with Soong as early as 1929 after being appointed by the League's Secretary-General, Eric Drummond, to provide advice to the Chinese government.[42]

Efforts to sustain technical cooperation with the ICIC's education missions paved the path for further cooperation in the realm of educational film as well as participation in international film competitions. These events, not unlike art exhibitions, enabled Chinese educators and filmmakers to project their own image of China onto the world stage.[43] From the ICIC's perspective, the visualization of modernity and nationhood through educational film initiatives demonstrated to the international community that the Chinese government was aligned with the ICIC's mandate to promote international understanding and cooperation.

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37 "Technical Co-operation between the League and China – Appointment of Dr. Rajchman as Technical Agent of the Council [Technical Adviser to Chinese Government] – General Arrangements", UNAG, R5707/50/6103/5828. See also Marta A. Balińska, *For the Good of Humanity: Ludwik Rajchman Medical Statesmen* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1998), 88.

38 The ICIC *Report of the Committee on the Work of its Fourteenth Plenary Session* noted that "This is the first time that the International Organisation of Intellectual Cooperation has been able to furnish direct assistance to a Government, and it feels great satisfaction at the opportunity so afforded": *Commission Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle, Rapport de la Commission sur les travaux de sa quatorzième session plénière*, July 1932, UNAG, R2226/5B/38567/2423, 19. For the League's publication on the Mission of Educational Experts to China, see *The Reorganisation of Education in China* (Paris: International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, 1932) and Chang, *Guoji hezuo zai zhongguo*, 49–50.

39 In addition to representing China at the ICIC, the Nationalist government appointed Wu to multiple committees on education and language reform. Wu also oversaw the work of the Chinese National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation and took responsibility for the safekeeping of BSI Shanghai collections and relocation of the Chinese Committee following the outbreak of Second Sino-Japanese War in 1937: Chengye Tang, *Wu Jingheng shu zhuan* [Narrative Biography of Wu Jingheng], vol. 5 (Taipei: Shijie shuju, 1987), 2600–4; and "Committee on International Cooperation: Series of Correspondences with a Chinese member (Mr. Wu Shi-Fee)", UNAG, R2219/5B/5744/1397.

40 Letter from Rajchman, 10 February 1932, UNAG, R2219/5B/5744/1397.

41 Chiang conferred frequently with Wu regarding political and military affairs, from the Northern Expedition onwards (including during the Second Sino-Japanese War): Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Wu Zhihui Archive (Zhi) 1894–1952, Reels 29, 36, 38, Kuomintang Records (1894–1987), Collection Number 2006C29.

42 Balińska, *For the Good of Humanity*, 81–102.

43 Li, *Transnational Education*, 159.

All of the BSI's founding members had strong links to the League. In 1931, the BSI's co-founder Carl H. Becker, Prussia's former Minister of Education, was one of five members of the Mission of Educational Experts to China, which had been appointed by the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) to submit recommendations for reorganizing public education in China. Another co-founder of the BSI and participant in the ICIC was the French-educated biologist, KMT activist and education reformer Li Shizeng, who used his birth name Li Yuying in many of these interactions. Not only was Li a confidante of ICIC member Wu: he also represented Wu at several ICIC meetings in Geneva and was a longtime friend of another BSI co-founder, the former French prime minister Édouard Herriot – an early champion of the League. Li was also central to the opening of the BSI's Shanghai branch. While the branch was formally launched in 1934, it was already open to the public in 1932 as the "World Institute" library of Che Kiai Che. The Che Kiai Che was Li's publishing and education enterprise, which had been introduced in the West as the International Association for Intellectual Economic and Social Development (Association de coopération internationale pour le développement intellectuel, économique et social) in the late 1920s.[44] It also hosted the offices of the Chinese National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation (Figure 13.1).

Complementing the support by the BSI's well-connected founders, the BSI secured the political and financial backing of the Nationalist government and its advisors for its remarkably expansive operations. During the BSI's golden period from 1934 through 1936, the BSI enterprise consisted of three locations operating from the most prestigious districts in Geneva and from the aforementioned BSI branch in Shanghai, situated on Li's Che Kiai Che's grand premises in the French Concession. Encouraged by the successful technical cooperation between the ICIC and the Nationalist government, Li and Wu continued to fundraise in support of the National Language Movement while the BSI established a centre for Chinese language instruction (Institut Sino-International), translation service (Bureau de Traduction Sino-International), a printing facility (Imprimerie Sino-Internationale) for the reproduction of artworks and publication of texts in both Chinese and non-Chinese editions, and a grand library with administrative offices at the stately Château de Montalègre located on Route de Vésenaz in Cologny across Lake Geneva and facing in the direction of the then newly built 1937 League of Nations complex and the International Labour Office.[45]

If the growing BSI enterprise in Geneva and Shanghai was testimony to the symbiotic relationship between the NEC, BSI and the ICIC, the BSI also benefitted from its elite networks in both Europe and China and the unique international community in Geneva. According to League archival records for the period of 1933–39, the BSI was the only independent, non-Swiss library in Geneva granted inter-library exchange privileges with the League of Nations Library.[46] As noted by the BSI's last director, Hsiao Yu, who would later serve as a Chinese representative to UNESCO, the

[44] A sixteen-page undated brochure titled, CHE KIAI CHE – *Association de Coopération Internationale pour le Développement Intellectuel, Économique et Social*, featured photos of the organization's building and interior, which match photos published in the 1934 BSI Shanghai catalogue commemorating its opening. A special acknowledgement of thanks is extended to Xavier Bouvier of the Haute école de musique de Genève for sharing the *Che Kiai Che* document.

[45] *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève* (2nd edn), 8–9, 19 and 22. See also Chyne, *Handbook of Cultural Institutions in China*, 35 and "Application for Documents by Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale", UNAG, R5528/19/5607/5607.

[46] "Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale", UNAG, S1687/2-B.

Figure 13.1:
Extract from the publication *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale, Sections: Genève, Shanghai* (Shanghai: Che Kiai Chou Kiu Société Limitée, 1934), depicting members of the Chinese National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation and BSI board members in front of the Che Kiai She (World Institute) building, April 1934. From left to right: Chyne Wen-ya (Zhuang Wenya), Hu Tien-she (Hu Tianshi), Tchen Hoshien (Chen Hexian), Ludwik Rajchman, Tsai Yuan-pei (Cai Yuanpei), T. V. Soong, Li Shizeng (listed in the book as Li Yu-ying), Tsu Ming-yi (Chu Minyi).

library became reasonably well-known to the public during the interwar years, even appearing as a landmark on Geneva tourist maps.[47] More importantly, the BSI's physical presence in Geneva bolstered China's international image as a world power.

Seeing is believing: the BSI beyond the ICIC

For China, representation mattered, especially in relation to Japan and its propaganda offensive in this period.[48] To effectively respond on the international stage, China turned to visual culture and imagery. In doing so, the Nationalist government was not only developing a public relations strategy to command parity if not partnership in Geneva, but also to combat low morale and reshape China's public image with the aim of presenting a more positive and internationalist outlook against the backdrop of global economic crisis and diplomatic impasse.

Closer consideration of the visual source material makes it possible to see how the Nationalist government developed its propaganda approaches and activities both in China and overseas. In 1934 and 1936, the BSI published two booklets, *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève*, each of them in both French and German. These were tastefully produced promotional materials aimed at European audiences. The 1936 second edition numbered 64 pages with 27 black-and-white "illustrations" (photographic images) and included a chronological recounting of its history as an institution with a particular focus on the BSI book and art collections, how they came to be incorporated into the BSI Geneva and biographical descriptions of the elite collectors and scholars who generously loaned their belongings to the BSI.[49] The note on the cover of the 1936 edition – indicating that its content featured 27 images – conveyed not only the status and appeal of visuals, but also the high costs of production invested in this "catalogue" akin to those of a souvenir museum guide.

The BSI's large format pictorial, *China Illustrated*, which appeared from 1935 to 1937, published articles and photo images of NEC's industrial and agricultural projects in China as well as a special section on economic and diplomatic news, in which Soong and members of the NEC often appeared. Advertisements included BSI publications and souvenir postcards of the BSI for purchase. Although the 1936 edition of the BSI brochure was not included as part of the inventory for sale, the 1934 edition was priced at two Swiss francs.[50] In terms of content, both the 1934 and 1936 editions included lists of prominent libraries in the Western world by country that had acquired holdings of books on Sinology and/or books about China, listing the number of works arranged by subject.[51] The 1936 edition also featured many photos of the BSI's stately exterior (Figure 13.2) and the interior of its embassy-like premises. While the 1934 edition was not as expansive as the 1936 edition,

47 Xiao Yu, "Li Shilao yu zhongguo guoji tushuguan – Li Shizeng xiansheng zhuanji zhiba" [Li and the Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale – Biography of Mr. Li Shizeng, Installment 8], *Yiwenzhi* [Arts and Letters Journal] (July 1975), 7.

48 The surviving BSI collections contain 1934 and 1935 issues of the photomontage magazine, *Nippon*, a privately published magazine in English, French, Spanish and German. This large format publication was acquired by Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to attract an overseas audience as part of Japan's interwar propaganda offensive, see Barak Kushner, *The Thought War: Japanese Imperial Propaganda* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 75–6. See also William A. Callahan, *Sensible Politics: Visualizing International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); Karou Ueda, ed., *Fanning the Flames: Propaganda in Modern Japan* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 2021).

49 *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève* (2nd edn).

50 *China Illustrated*, no. 11 (1936), 12.

51 Qiang Lei and Gengsheng Tang, "Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève and the *Orient et Occident*", *Journal of Library and Information Studies* 13, no. 1 (2015): 135–61. See also the programme of the symposium "Around the Geneva Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale", 11–13 April 2024, available at https://bibliosinoint.ch/wp/en/symposium/program/ (last accessed 25 March 2025).

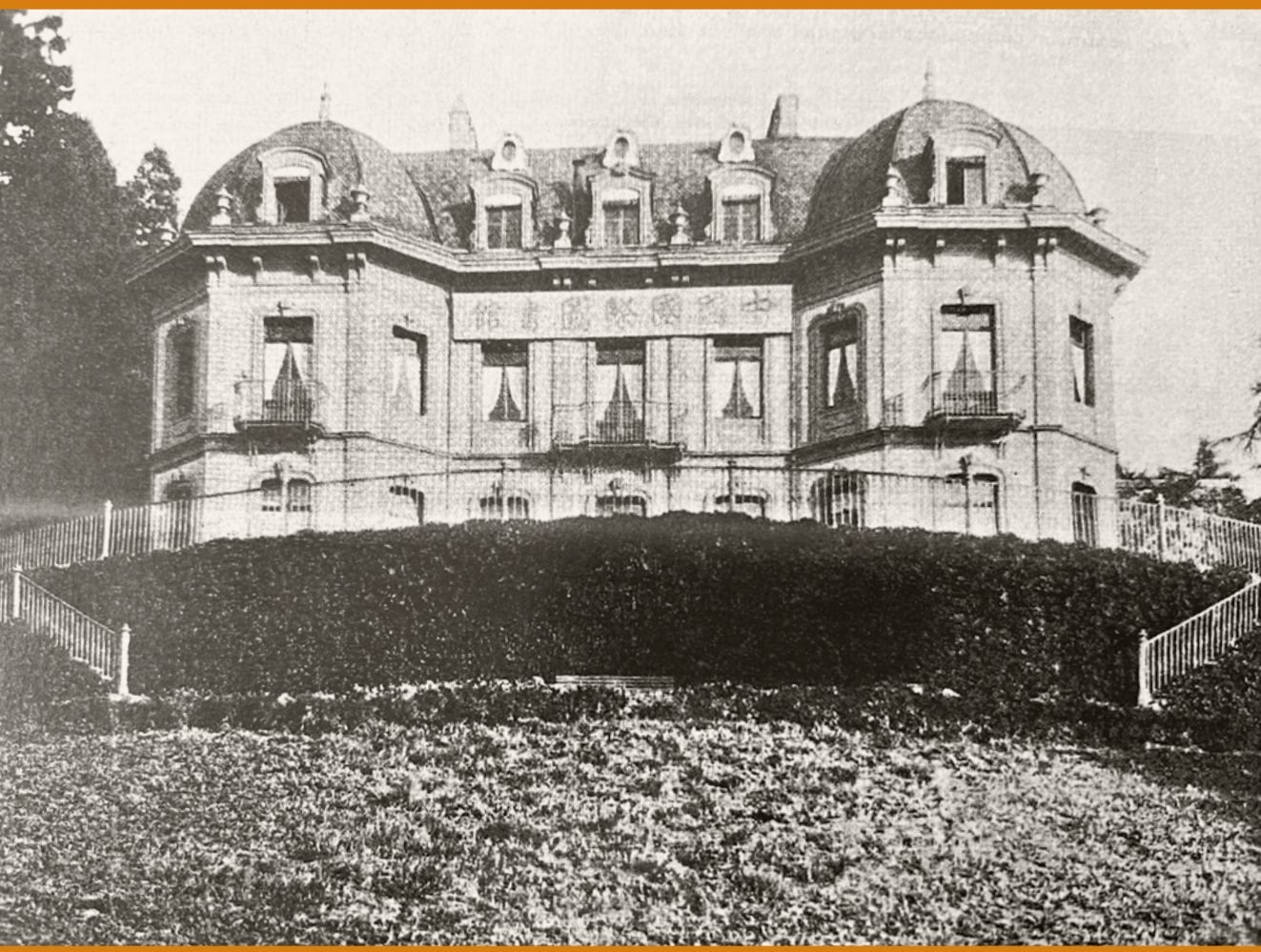

Figure 13.2:
The exterior of the BSI at the Château de Montalègre, as depicted in the second edition of the BSI brochure. *Source:* second edition of *Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale Genève* (Geneva: Imprimerie et Editions Union, 1936), 19.

both editions showed images of the BSI's fusion of Chinese and European-inspired interior design, featuring Chinese decorative objects and ink brush paintings known as *guohua* ("national paintings") interspersed among fine European furnishings. Consistent with the ICIC's advocacy for cross-cultural dialogue through documentation exchange, the BSI's printed materials re-signified China's allegiance to the ICIC's vision of intellectual cooperation. According to the *Handbook of Cultural Institutions in China* – published in 1936 by China's National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation – the BSI in Geneva held approximately 200,000 books, half of them "Western books".[52]

BSI publications – and the activities surrounding them – revealed the desire to amplify China's stature in the international community of Geneva, if not the world. These documents impart a crucial understanding of not only the BSI's close relationship with the ICIC but also illuminate the vital roles that different kinds of media played in the propaganda war between China and Japan. After the start of the Second Sino-Japanese War in July 1937, the BSI transformed into Republican China's European war room, as one contemporary account suggested: "By sending regular 'communiqués' to the foreign press, it renders Japanese defamations ineffectual, informs the public regarding the progress of our heroic fight as well as the atrocities committed by our enemies". The commentator noted that "The most distinguished Chinese patriots, including M. Wellington Koo, our ambassador at Paris, have proclaimed aloud the usefulness of its activity".[53] Writing to Victor Hoo – the Republic of China's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister-Plenipotentiary to Switzerland - in August 1937, Koo underlined the need to keep the League of Nations "informed of what has been happening in the Far East". In doing so he stressed "the importance of arranging for more effective publicity abroad".[54]

The BSI's cumulative undertakings up to 1939 were facilitated by the close coordination between representatives of the Nationalist government and League representatives. Mona Hoo – daughter of Victor Hoo, whose diplomatic role in Geneva lasted from 1933 to 1941 – recalled that her father took responsibility for coordinating the Chinese Delegation's activities at the League and "liaising with the Chinese academics at the Bibliothèque Chinoise".[55] The physical presence of the BSI in Geneva reminded the world of China's commitment to foster mutual understanding, and an ongoing exchange of ideas and practices of the arts and sciences under the aegis of the ICIC.

In October 1937, the BSI relocated from the Château de Montalègre to quarters that had formerly housed the Disarmament Commission at 53, Quai Wilson, next to the offices of China's Permanent Delegation to the League of Nations and overseas Chinese organizations participating in relief work.[56] One salient characteristic of the BSI's new space was its "museum" on the main floor, aimed at building awareness of Japanese wartime aggression in China through exhibitions, lectures and cultural propaganda.[57] Already in 1932, in the immediate aftermath of the 1931 Manchurian Crisis, the League and the ICIC received telegrams from Cai Yuanpei, then the president of Academia Sinica, concerning Japan's premeditated bombings of China's universities and the Commercial Press, Chian's

52 Chyne, *Handbook of Cultural Institutions in China*, 36.

53 Anon., "Geneva's Bibliotheque [sic] Sino-Internationale", 200.

54 Letter from Koo to Hoo, 13 August 1937, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Victor Hoo files, 1937, Box 1, Folder I.11.

55 Hoo, *Painting the Shadows*, 33.

56 "Application for Documents by Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale", 1933–1944, UNAG, R5528/19/5607/5607; and Tienshe Hu "Zhongguo guoji tushuguan yu kangzhan" [Bibliothèque Sino-Internationale and the War of Resistance to Japan], *Zhonghua tushuguan xiehui huibao* [Bulletin of the Library Association of China] 14, no. 4 (1940), 4.

57 Anon., "Geneva's Bibliotheque [sic] Sino-Internationale", 199.

predominant textbook publishing company.[58] The ICIC's Gilbert Murray forwarded the telegrams to Drummond; however, the League was incapable of providing any political solution or relief to China beyond circulating China's appeals among its members, with League official Jean-Daniel de Montenach stating his view that "no further steps need to be taken, except to communicate the document to the members of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation for their information".[59]

The BSI headquarters continued its many functions as a library, but expanded its arts and cultural activities during the Second Sino-Japanese War, the Second World War and the Chinese Civil War of 1945–49. The BSI's provisional executive committee member, H. H. Kung – then the vice premier (and premier from 1938 to 1939) of the Executive Yuan – had a considerable interest in the library's representative features. So did other Chinese officials. For example, in June 1937 – less than two weeks before the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War – Wellington Koo's assistant, C. K. Sze (Shih Zhaokui), contacted Victor Hoo as China's leading diplomatic representative in China, requesting the dimensions of the rooms assigned to China for its future premises.[60] Shortly thereafter, Hoo wrote to Sze about the interior of the new League of Nations building, the Palais des Nations, noting potential Chinese contributions. Hoo said he had been "told that what the League wants is a good Chinese rug, 4 big really good panels and silk for the walls. That would be all. The 2 big cloisonne vases may also be used in another room (sitting room of the Council)." The statement revealed some issues with prior Chinese donations, as Hoo stated that "The architect was pleased that we did not like ourselves our present gifts. He said that nobody liked them but that it was difficult for the League to tell us so. That is why our gifts have not yet been placed in any room."[61] While the latter comment highlights potential tensions, it indicates the role of Chinese objects in diplomatic settings at the time. Indeed, Koo's wife, Oei Hui-lan, recalled that Kung exhibited great interest in the presentation of the Republic of China's embassy in Paris, noting that he "never misses the smallest detail – and is not averse to criticising openly". She also noted an instance when during an inspection tour of the new embassy in 1936, he mixed praise with criticism: "This is a real embassy. This is the first time China has been so well represented abroad!"[62]

Kung's close attention to China's diplomatic spaces in Geneva and elsewhere can be attributed to European depictions of China as an undeveloped nation and stagnant civilization. Moreover, Japanese wartime propaganda evoked China's supposed backwardness and disunity in an attempt to highlight the need for external tutelage.[63] Thus, the representation of China's cultural heritage was of crucial importance.

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58 "Sino-Japanese dispute – Appeal of Chinese universities to the international convention of cooperation of intellectual cooperation", UNAG, R1870/1A/34524/31334.

59 Letter from Jean-Daniel de Montenach to Gilbert Murray, 18 March 1932, UNAG, R1870/1A/34524/31334.

60 Letter from C.K. Sze of the ROC Embassy in Paris (sent on behalf of Wellington Koo) to Victor Hoo, 26 June 1937, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Victor Hoo Files, 1937, Box 1, Folder I.11.

61 Letter from Victor Hoo to C. K. Sze, 5 July 1937, Hoover Institution Library and Archives, Victor Hoo Files, 1933–1945 (Feb. 2016 release of records), Box 10, Folder 10.

62 Hui-Lan Koo and Mary Van Rensselaer Thayer, *Hui-lan Koo (Madame Wellington Koo): An Autobiography as Told to Mary Van Rensselaer Thayer* (New York: Dial Press, 1943), 338.

63 Kushner, *The Thought War*, 118–19. See also Christopher R. Hughes, "Sovereignty as 'Organised Hypocrisy': China's Diplomats and the Lytton Commission", in *East Asians in the League of Nations: Actors, Empires and Regions in Early Global Politics*, ed. Christopher R. Hughes and Hatsue Shinohara (Singapore: Palgrave, 2023), 263.

Although photos of the BSI's wartime museum have yet to be found, seasoned internationalists Kung and Li would likely have understood the potential appeal of a display featuring Chinese painting, porcelain, ceramics, lacquerware and other art forms in Europe. By extension, the BSI and visual images of its former quarters at the Château de Montalègre suggest a high probability that every effort was made to install Chinese paintings and/or Chinese objects at 53, Quai Wilson. While many in China expressed an increasingly urgent need to reinterpret and redefine Chinese culture and art in a global context, the Nationalist government pursued policies that aimed to promote Chinese culture worldwide and to elevate Chinese art and artistic tradition to the same international status as that enjoyed by Western art. Li's collaborator, the revolutionary and education reformer Cai Yuanpei was among of the most ardent advocates of the government's policies to promote cross-cultural understanding. As a result, Chinese art was channelled into a wider dialogue within an international context.

Conclusion

The complex dynamics of the BSI, relative to its various sites and functions, allow one to explore important questions about the changing concept of "Sino-International", for which Li had held great hopes:

> Where did the term 'Sino-International' come from? During the time of the League of Nations, the question of China was often a topic of discussion and referred to as 'Sino-international' to represent the international nature of the China question […] What is Sino-international? It means that China has its part in the international [...] We believe that international culture is incomplete without Chinese culture being part of it.[64]

As we have seen, the history of the BSI's role in supporting the Nationalist government's intellectual and cultural endeavours was grounded in its founding members' lobbying efforts at the League of Nations, with hopes for an equal partnership in the construction of a post-war world order.

In 1931, Belgian ICIC vice-president Jules Destrée addressed the subject of Chinese masterpieces that Europeans and Americans were removing from China. In arguing that they should remain in China and be conserved in municipal museums, he stated that "This is the now-or-never moment for China to undertake a work of this kind: the nationalist movement reveals the existence of a people who finally is self-conscious". According to Destrée, such a sentiment would manifest itself "in the care for the conservation of masterpieces that perpetuate the memory of a civilization" that had already existed "when Europe remained in the depth of barbarity".[65] At one level, these comments reflect Destrée's wider involvement in ICIC activities on cultural heritage – as discussed in Annamaria Ducci's contribution to this volume – yet they also highlight how the cultural terrain was central to the recognition of China within Europe.

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[64] Regarding Li's interpretation of "Sino-International", see "Zhongguo guoji xueshu wenti – lianheguo zhongguo tongzhihui diershiliuci zuotanhui jiyao" [Sino-International Academic Matters – Minutes of the 26th Symposium of the United Nations Chinese Assembly], *Dalu zazhi* [Continent Magazine] 6, no. 2 (1953): 28–30.

[65] Commission Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle, Procès-Verbal de la Treizième Session, Tenue à Genève, du lundi 20 au samedi 25 juillet 1931", 42–3, UNAG, C.471.M.201. Prior to his work at the ICIC, Destrée served as the Belgian Minister of Arts and Sciences (1919–1921). He later participated in meetings concerning the allocation of the Sino-Belgian Boxer Indemnity Scholarship for Chinese students to study in Belgium: see Zhiyuan Pan, "Inculturation at Home: The Belgian Catholic Project for Chinese Students (1920–1930s)", *Religions* 15, no. 3 (2024), 327.

In adherence with ICIC principles, the NEC continued to support the BSI to enable it to persevere through domestic and international crises against the backdrop of rapidly shifting geopolitics triggered by global conflicts. Even after the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 and the Second World War in 1939, archival documents confirm Soong, Rajchman and Li's commitment to attending meetings at the ICIC and IIIC and ensuring the transfer of China's membership dues.[66] The BSI was therefore a key actor in maintaining China's mission from interwar to wartime cultural diplomacy. For the Nationalist government, as financial support became much less certain for the League, the idea of the BSI, ICIC and IIIC as havens for China–Europe dialogue became increasingly critical. The history of the BSI thus offers a rich and diverse range of possibilities to reconsider the transnational history of China and the League of Nations.

[66] 'Shijie wenhua hezuohui' [International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation], 1 September 1937, No. 11-LAW-01097, Archives of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica; Doc. A309000000E-0030-640-51-0001-001-0037, "Bali wenhua hezuo xueyuan jingfei" [International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation Fees], 9 May 1940, National Archives Administration (Taipei).

14

The *Entretien* of Buenos Aires in 1936:

Debates on Intellectual Cooperation and Western Culture in a World on Edge

Leandro Lacquaniti

In early September 1936, two international writers' congresses took place in Buenos Aires: the PEN Club's and the *Entretien*. The latter event was promoted by the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC) and organized by the Argentinian writer Carlos Ibarguren with support from the national government.[1] At the time, Buenos Aires was a forum for political discussion concerning the events that were unfolding in Europe, among them the recent outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, the spread of fascism and the possibility of a new world war.[2] Faced with the risk of a new conflagration that threatened to destroy the pillars of European civilization, intellectuals and diplomats from different countries united to issue a call for peace.[3] They also agreed on the fact that Latin America would be a good "refuge" for Western culture, and some of them thought that Argentina could be at the forefront of this project.[4]

The PEN Club congress and the *Entretien* meetings were important platforms from which to project a positive image of Argentinian culture towards the world. So thought Argentinian President Agustín P. Justo, who was involved in the organization of both events, through which he saw an opportunity to present the country as an example of a modern republic, respectful of traditions and of different political and ideological creeds.[5] The fact that Justo sponsored these events might also have reflected his intention to improve his image abroad after having been accused by some left-wing

1 The *Entretien* of Buenos Aires of 1936 was the first of this kind of meetings sponsored by the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation through the IIIC that took place in the Americas.

2 Tulio Halperin Donghi, *Argentina y la tormenta del mundo. Ideas e ideologías entre 1930 y 1945* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2003).

3 In early December 1936, the Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, organized by the Pan-American Union, also took place in the city of Buenos Aires.

4 A detailed reconstruction of these debates can be found in Celina Manzoni, "Buenos Aires 1936: Debate en la república de las letras", *Hispamérica* 34, no. 100 (2005): 3–17; Celina Manzoni, "Liberalismo, Izquierda y Nacionalismo en los debates de 1936 en Buenos Aires", T*elar: Revista del Instituto Interdisciplinario de Estudios Latinoamericanos*, no. 5 (2007): 161–72; Celina Manzoni, "Vacilaciones de un rol: los intelectuales en 1936", in *Rupturas: Historia crítica de la literatura argentina*, ed. Celina Manzoni (Buenos Aires: Emecé, 2009), 541–68; Corinne Pernet, "La cultura como política: Los intercambios culturales entre Europa y América Latina en los años de entreguerras", *Puente@Europa* 5, no. 3–4 (2007): 66–73; Alejandra Giuliani, "The 1936 Meetings of the PEN Clubs and the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Buenos Aires", in *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-América*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Jaume Subirana (New York: Routledge, 2020), 127–43; Alexandra Pita González, "América y Europa: una conversación a la sombra de la Guerra", in *Redes intelectuales y redes textuales: Formas y prácticas de la sociabilidad letrada*, ed. Liliana Weinberg (México: Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia, 2021), 337–57.

5 The PEN Club meeting took place between 5 and 15 September, while the *Entretien* met from 11 to 16 September. To host the meetings, Justo requested a credit of 300,000 Argentine pesos from the National Congress in order to pay for the travel and accommodation of the writers. The meetings took place in the Deliberative Council of the city of Buenos Aires with an audience that, according to the press, filled the rooms and crowded the stairs and hallways to hear the speeches of the congressmen.

writers of pursuing fascist-leaning policies in Argentina.[6] In an article on the PEN Club congress published by the Argentinian newspaper *Crítica*, the Italian writer Mario Mariani – an exile and anti-fascist activist – said that Argentina was "not at present a country under the rule of democratic liberties" since "poets and writers are put on trial for the crime of expressing in literary form their disgust for the ruling social injustice and their hope for a more equal world" and "all the official institutions related to the issue of culture are practically in the hands of fascism".[7]

Some Argentinian writers involved in the organization of the PEN Club and the *Entretien* saw both congresses as important vehicles for the promotion of Argentinian literature in the world. According to Argentinian nationalist writer Manuel Gálvez, international literary gatherings of that sort "relate[d] us to European literature, set us free from the barbaric and dirty *poncho* of gaucho individualism in which we arrogantly shrouded ourselves".[8] Carlos Ibarguren, nationalist writer and local organizer of the PEN Club and of the *Entretien*, also emphasized the importance of these congresses because "they will let the world know the thought and culture of Argentina, so that our Fatherland will not be seen just as a meat or cereals producer or as a commercial centre whose market attracts the interest of the nations of the world only from this material point of view".[9]

This chapter examines the speeches delivered by the writers invited to the PEN Club and to the *Entretien*, in particular focusing on those referring to the social role of the intellectual and to the relationship between culture and politics. It also uncovers some of the views that the attendants expressed about Latin America in general and about Argentina in particular, specifically regarding the defence of Western culture and intellectual cooperation within the framework of the League of Nations. The chapter first reconstructs the images that foreign writers had of Argentina on their arrival in the country in 1936, mainly based on the analysis of a series of interviews conducted at the time by the Argentinian culture magazine *Caras y Caretas*. This approach allows us, among other things, to explore how certain representations of Latin American and/or Argentinian culture had permeated the imaginary of foreign educated elites as an effect of the transnational circulation of ideas and the cultural exchanges that took place throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. The following two sections focus on the addresses delivered by the writers at the PEN Club and at the *Entretien* in order to show both the agreements and also the obstacles in putting together a project to promote cultural relations and international cooperation between Latin American and European countries in the turbulent world of the mid-1930s.

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6 Justo was a military man who became Argentina's president through the 1932 elections, in which the Unión Cívica Radical (political party that represented the majority of voters) abstained from participating due to the banning of its main candidate. Later, during Justo's administration, electoral fraud was frequently used to guarantee the victory of the ruling party in different elections. Sylvia Saítta, "Entre la cultura y la política: Los escritores de izquierda", in *Nueva Historia Argentina: Crisis económica, avance del Estado e incertidumbre política (1930–1943)*, ed. Alejandro Cattaruzza (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2001) 408–9.

7 "El PEN Club de Buenos Aires vive ajeno a la realidad del mundo", *Crítica*, 8 September 1936. From Celia de Aldama Ordóñez, "1936: La pluma y la espada", 337.

8 As quoted in Manzoni, "Vacilaciones de un rol", 7.

9 *Información radiotelefónica de Carlos Ibarguren sobre el Congreso Internacional de Escritores*. 16 de Julio de 1936. Archivo de la Academia Nacional de la Historia (AANHRP). *Fondo Carlos Ibarguren*. Inventario N° 14, Caja IX, Folio 78, 5.

Argentina in the eyes of European writers

International intellectual forums like the PEN Clubs and the meetings promoted by the IIIC were places where different ideas of the nation played out.[10] At the Buenos Aires meeting in September 1936, a lack of knowledge of Argentinian reality was highlighted by several European speakers who arrived to the country to take part in both congresses. The writers remarked that these kinds of meetings contributed to the eradication of false representations of Argentina, among them the idea of the nation as a "tropical" country. Likewise, some writers ruled out the idea that Argentina could be considered a "sad" country, a recurring image that was used to typify the national character.

Indeed, while both congresses took place, the journalist Leandro R. Reynés asked the writers who had been invited "Is Buenos Aires sad?" and "Are we Argentinians a sad people?". *Caras y Caretas* published the answers in four consecutive issues and, mostly, the writers agreed that, despite the images that Argentinians had of themselves or those that were attributed to them by foreign visitors, Argentinian society – or at least Buenos Aires – had nothing melancholy about it.[11] In fact, the representation of Argentina as a "sad" country, that many carried with them before arriving in Buenos Aires, could have been based on literature[12] and certain tango songs, as well as on films and other products of a melodramatic culture that circulated in the mass market in those times, especially between the 1920s and the 1930s.[13]

Most writers consulted denied that Argentina was a sad nation. In the first issue dedicated to the question, exiled Austrian novelist Stefan Zweig wrote, "The sadness of Buenos Aires? I have not noticed it at all during these luminous days. On the contrary, I have not found but candid and open hearts, and since I have looked at this city with gleeful eyes, how could I have seen in it melancholy and sadness?" Sophia Wadia, founder of the PEN All-India Centre (Figure 14.1), said "whoever has posited that Buenos Aires is sad and the Argentinians are sad has expressed a personal opinion which I do not share. I have just been in the company of this group of Argentinian young ladies and we have done nothing but laugh. How would the Argentinians be sad?" The delegate of Portugal, Fidelino de Figueiredo, also denied that Argentina was sad or melancholy since "the warm interest of the public shows it. Was there not joy in the crowd, intellectual joy, if you wish, but true joy after all? I think this form of joy is more lasting, even if it is an elitist joy." Even more forceful was the answer of the Uruguayan delegate Carlos Reyles: "I think that the sadness of the city is a myth".[14]

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[10] Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2013); Daniel Laqua, "Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l'entre-deux-guerres", *Critique Internationale* 52, no. 3 (2011): 51–67.

[11] *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1982, 26 September 1936, 4–5; *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1983, 3 October 1936, 4–5; *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1984, 10 October 1936, 44–5; *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1985, 17 October 1936, 4–5.

[12] María Teresa Gramuglio, "Posiciones, transformaciones y debates en la literatura", in *Nueva Historia Argentina: Crisis económica, avance del Estado e incertidumbre política (1930–1943)*, ed. Alejandro Cattaruzza (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2001), 358–60; Nora Pasternac, *SUR, una revista en la tormenta. Los años de formación 1931–1944* (Buenos Aires: Paradiso, 2002), 55–88; María Rosa Lojo, "Los viajeros intelectuales: Keyserling y Frank, en Historia de una pasión argentina de Eduardo Mallea", *Taller de Letras*, no. 42 (2008): 73–90.

[13] Matthew B. Karush, *Cultura de clase: Radio y cine en la creación de una argentina dividida (1920–1946)* (Buenos Aires: Ariel, 2013), 121–72.

[14] All the quotes are from: "¿Es triste Buenos Aires? ¿Somos tristes los argentinos? Encuesta realizada por Leandro R. Reynes", *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1982, 26 September 1936, 4–5.

Figure 14.1:
The Indian delegate and co-founder of the PEN-All India Centre, Sophia Wadia, in conversation with the vie-president of PEN Buenos Aires, Victoria Ocampo, as Wadia's sister, Ditabai Wadia, looks on. *Source*: General Archive of the Argentine Nation, AGN01-AGAS-Ddf-rg-(127211).

Some of the writers answered the question of the interviewer based on images of Argentina that came from their reading of the book *South American Meditations*, by the Baltic German philosopher Hermann Keyserling, who had defined the country by its singularly melancholy features.[15] According to the the initiator of the *Caras y Caretas* survey:

> Keyserling had posited that our sadness [...] is not, in his opinion, exclusively Argentinian, but "South American". "The South American man" – he says – "is essentially taciturn. The more profound he is, the more taciturn. The graver a conflict is, the more he withholds his voice." And elsewhere he says: "The exuberance of South American life is never found under the sign of joy. I have defined Argentinian life as a muffled life. The streets are at night shrouded in darkness, the faces are unemotional, everyone speaks in a whisper and a guffaw is considered tactless. In everything and everywhere the most extreme decorum is observed. And all that to hide the own inner bog."[16]

The writers rejected Keyserling's characterization and "sent up the German writer".[17] Melchor de Almagro San Martín, official delegate of Spain, was categorical in this respect and summarized his opinion by saying "I think that Count Keyserling got the wrong end of the stick, as it is vulgarly put".[18] Christovam de Camargo, delegate of Brazil, claimed that "Keyserling was a *macaneador* [liar] (I like this *criollo* term very much; it is so tasty). He heard some tangos, he realized they were sad and simply concluded: tango is sad; Argentinians like tango, therefore Argentinians are sad […] We must end with that stupid superstition that Argentinians are a sad people."[19]

Other writers also refused to apply the characterization of a melancholy Argentina or Buenos Aires to the rest of the Argentinian provinces. Some of them argued that even if local (*criollas*) songs might have a certain degree of sadness, this was not an original feature of Argentinians, since the folk music of other nations also had a melancholy tone. Johannes Semper, delegate of Estonia, said he had "found mostly joy and activity" and that even if "the national melodies are sad, and the popular dances have a languor that reminds me a lot of Russian melodies and dances", the "brightness of Argentinian eyes makes me forget instantly the reminiscences of the melancholy Pampas".[20] The Catalan delegate Joan Estelrich expressed a similar view, admitting that he found "a certain sadness at the heart of the Argentinian character" that expressed itself "singularly in the music, whose essence is melancholy and borders on despair [...] Maybe the Pampa also has an influence; all plains incline people to sadness, like a feeling of loneliness. That Argentinian sentimentality does not displease me."[21] Likewise, Louis Piérard, delegate of Belgium, stated that "it is the Argentinians themselves who, in their conversations with foreigners, insist on some inborn sadness of theirs, and that would

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15 In 1931, an article by Keyserling in *Sur* – a magazine edited by Victoria Ocampo – presented some ideas of his subsequent book on South America: Hermann Keyserling, "Perspectivas suamericanas", Sur 1, no. 2 (1931): 7–15; Hermann Keyserling, *Südamerikanische Meditationen* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1932). The writer had previously visited Argentina in 1929. His presence was so prominent in the press of the time that the popular tango singer Carlos Gardel ironically referred to him in the lyrics of his song "Mentiras Criollas": "¡No te hagas el Keyserling!" ("Don't play Keyserling!").

16 "¿Es triste Buenos Aires?", 4.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., 5.

19 "¿Es triste Buenos Aires? ¿Somos tristes los argentinos? Encuesta realizada por Leandro R. Reynes", *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1984, 10 October 1936, 45.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., 44. At that time, Estelrich was involved in the (failed) creation of a Catalan committee for intellectual cooperation.

be due, according to their opinion, to the monotony of the landscape of the Pampas", but argued the sadness present in some popular songs "is not a specifically Argentinian phenomenon" because, for example, "the Russian steppe inspires analogous feelings and folk music".[22]

Besides the topic of the singular sadness of the Argentinians, the congress participants said that they had been surprised at the auspicious signs of modernization that the country evinced. Argentina was not only the Pampa; it also stood out because it contained a city like Buenos Aires, whose architectural and technical advances were on a par with those of the main European cities. These impressions undoubtedly stemmed from the urban transformation that was taking place in the city in 1936.[23] If Argentina was on its way to being an architecturally modern country, that would surely contribute to fighting off sadness. According to the Polish novelist Jan Parandowski, "Buenos Aires is, to my mind, more a city of the future than a city of the present" and even though it had not yet acquired "its final shape" it was looking for it through "the demolition of old streets, too narrow for its momentum, and the construction of wide avenues that transform it visibly".[24] The delegate of Bolivia, Alcides Arguedas, stated that "Buenos Aires has steel muscles to tear down the old, open up its narrow streets and get light and air in them" to "appear clean, decent and immaculate".[25] For the French delegate Benjamín Cremieux, the "sadness of the city of Buenos Aires" seemed to be provisional because "when the big lightwells whose construction has already begun have been finished, everything will change" and "the sadness of Argentinians is especially related to the vastness of the Pampa, to the isolation it inevitably creates. The more industrialized Argentina becomes, the less sad Argentinians will be."[26]

Intellectual cooperation and the defence of culture: the role of Latin America

The congresses of the PEN Club and the *Entretien* in the city of Buenos Aires were significant media events due to the coverage and promotion they received in the press and on the radio. Both president Justo and the Argentine Minister of the Interior, Ramón S. Castillo, attended the opening ceremony (Figure 14.2). Moreover, an aura of stardom surrounded the writers who visited the city on those days, and many columns were dedicated to the writers and the debates held during those encounters.[27]

The PEN Club congress centred around topics including the social function of the writer; the limits between art and politics; the freedom of the writer in literary creation; the defence of the rights of writers; cultural relations between Europe and the Americas; their opinions on the current European conflicts alongside calls for international peace. Although PEN International had stated

22 Ibid., 45.

23 The city of Buenos Aires was being remodelled for the celebration of the four hundred-year anniversary of its first foundation.

24 "¿Es triste Buenos Aires? ¿Somos tristes los argentinos? Encuesta realizada por Leandro R. Reynes", *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1983, 3 October 1936, 4.

25 "¿Es triste Buenos Aires? ¿Somos tristes los argentinos? Encuesta realizada por Leandro R. Reynes", *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1984, 10 October 1936, 5.

26 "¿Es triste Buenos Aires? ¿Somos tristes los argentinos? Encuesta realizada por Leandro R. Reynes", *Caras y Caretas*, no. 1985, 17 October 1936, 5.

27 Mateus Américo Gaioto, "O XIV Congreso Internacional dos P.E.N. Clubes (1936): intelectuais, cultura e política no entre guerras", *Aedos* 10, no. 23 (2018): 238–57; Miranda Lida, "El Congreso del P.E.N. Club en Buenos Aires", *Todo es Historia*, no. 619 (2019): 6–17; Celia de Aldama Ordóñez, "1936. La pluma y la espada. Marinetti, Puccini y Ungaretti en el PEN Club argentino", *Anuario de Estudios* Americanos 76, no. 1 (2019): 329–56; Aldo Mazzucchelli, "La segunda visita de Marinetti a Buenos Aires en 1936: Arte e Vita Futurista, y la visión de 'Europa' desde América del Sur", *Revista de literatura hispánica* 1, no. 93 (2021): 208–37.

Figure 14.2:
Opening ceremony of the PEN Club congress, 5 September 1936. From left to right: Argentina's Minister of the Interior, Ramón S. Castillo, the Argentine writer Carlos Ibarguren, the president of the Argentine Republic Juan P. Justo, and the French writer Jules Romains. *Source:* General Archive of the Argentine Nation, AGN01-AGAS-Ddf-rg-(41149).

from its earliest days that congresses should avoid political discussions and focus on problems related specifically to the writer's task, politics was omnipresent at the PEN congress in Buenos Aires. The discussions reignited disputes on fascism at earlier cultural events, for example the International Congress of Writers for the Defence of Culture presided over by André Gide and André Malraux in France in 1935.[28]

During one of the sessions, the German-born Jewish Swiss writer and biographer Emil Ludwig denounced the crimes of Nazism and defended the attitude of the intellectuals who engaged in political struggle and were committed to the social problems of their times. According to Ludwig, politics and literature could not be separated. On this point, he expressed his support for the views about the social commitment of authors that the Argentinian writer Victoria Ocampo had promoted in an earlier PEN Club meeting. He employed the metaphorical image previously used by Ocampo, who, to flatter the writers invited to the congress, declared that "the books, ladies and gentlemen, are you".[29] Ludwig reformulated that idea to refer to the book burning carried out by the Nazi regime: "one afternoon in the month of May 1933 I had the honour of sharing the fate of the best of my colleagues at a certain bonfire. I occupied a nice place between Heinrich Heine and Spinoza, and it seems to me more honourable to be burned alongside two natural-born geniuses than to be praised by some racist professors."[30] Later, the meeting included a heated exchange between the Italian writers – Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Mario Puccini and Giuseppe Ungaretti – and members of the French delegation, one of whom (Jules Romains) denounced the fact that Marinetti, while participating in a congress that advocated for peace, had signed press releases in favour of war and Italian imperialist expansion.[31] Surprisingly, there was no explicit mention of the ongoing Spanish Civil War during the whole event.

The *Entretien* took place between 11 and 16 September, at the same time as the PEN Club congress. The simultaneous organization of both events was an idea of Carlos Ibarguren and Antonio Aita, who sent their proposal to Henri Bonnet, director of the IIIC of Paris.[32] As its name denoted, the *Entretien* (in French the word means "talk" or "conversation") described the informal character of these meetings compared to the traditional public lectures that the writers delivered at PEN Club congresses.

The *Entretien* was, in the words of Carlos Ibarguren, sort of "an epilogue to the International Writers' Congress". In fact, the list of speakers at these meetings closely resembled that of the PEN Club's congress: it included the writers Alcides Arguedas (Bolivia), Enrique Díez Canedo

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[28] Ricardo Pasolini, "'La Internacional del espíritu': la cultura antifascista y las redes de solidaridad intelectual en la Argentina de los años treinta", in *Fascismo y antifascismo: Peronismo y antiperonismo. Conflictos políticos e ideológicos en la Argentina* (1930–1955), ed. Marcela García Sebastiani (Frankfurt and Madrid: Vervuert and Iberoamericana, 2006), 43–76; Michel Winock, *Le siècle des intellecutels* (Paris: Seuil, 1997), Chapter 27.

[29] "En ambiente a ratos muy caldeado desarrolláronse las sesiones del Congreso Internacional de los P.E.N. Clubs", *La Nación*, 9 September 1936, 10.

[30] Ibid.

[31] "El Congreso Internacional de Escritores incitó en la reunión realizada ayer a los gobiernos y a los pueblos a evitar una nueva guerra", *La Prensa*, 15 September 1936. No page number, newspaper clipping of the *AANHRP. Fondo Carlos Ibarguren. Inventario N° 14, Caja IX*. Despite the fact that the controversy between Marinetti and Romains was the tensest moment of the congress, a polite agreement was reached: at the proposal of the French delegation, the next PEN Club International Congress would be held in Rome and its president would be Jules Romains.

[32] *Carta de Henri Bonnet, Director del Instituto Internacional de Cooperación Intelectual, a Carlos Ibarguren*, 29/05/1936. AANHRP. *Fondo Carlos Ibarguren*. Caja 2, N° 14, Folio 1.

(Spain), Georges Duhamel (France), W. J. Entwistle (England), Joan Estelrich (Spain), Fidelino de Figueiredo (Portugal), Carlos Ibarguren (Argentina), Emil Ludwig (Switzerland), Jacques Maritain (France), Ralph Hale Mottram (England), Afraino Peixoto (Brazil), Louis Piérard (Belgium), Alfonso Reyes (Mexico), Carlos Reyles (Uruguay), Jules Romains (France), Francisco Romero (Argentina), Baldomero Sanín Cano (Colombia), Juan B. Terán (Argentina), Giuseppe Ungaretti (Italy), P. Henríquez Ureña (Dominican Republic) and Stefan Zweig (Austria).

According to a radio presentation by Carlos Ibarguren before the event, the *Entretien's* programme comprised two major elements:

a. European literature in the Americas. Tendencies and orientation of European literature and thought. Problems related to them. Influence of European thought and letters in the Americas in the past and present.

b. Future influence of Ibero-American literature on world thought. Originality of the American spirit. Its points of view on the main problems of world culture; for example, machinism, new humanism. National contributions of American countries to world culture.[33]

As this list shows, the main topic of the discussions revolved around the possibility of reaching minimum agreements to ensure the defence of a cultural tradition shared by European and American countries. But also, taking into account the evolution of European conflicts, the debates sought to reposition Latin America within the framework of international relations promoted by the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation through the League of Nations.

Europe and Latin America in search of a shared tradition

In 1937, the Argentinian Committee for Intellectual Cooperation published the book *Europe – Latin America*, which collected the speeches delivered at the *Entretien* of Buenos Aires in 1936.[34] The book was organized around two main hypotheses. The first of them was: what would be the fate of Western culture in case of a European catastrophe? If European culture was going through a deep crisis, the intellectuals were compelled to lay its foundations anew. Some thought that restoration had to be based on the ideals of a Greco-Latin and humanist culture that were being corrupted by communism, fascism and Nazism. Others, like Jacques Maritain, held that the founding of a "new humanism" should also promote Christian ideals and social justice. The second issue was: what role should Latin America play in the context of "the decline of the West"? There was common agreement that Latin America was to become "the refuge of Western culture".[35]

[33] *Información radiotelefónica de Carlos Ibarguren sobre el Congreso Internacional de Escritores*. July 16, 1936. AANHRP. *Fondo Carlos Ibarguren*. Inventario N° 14 – Caja IX – 78, 5.

[34] On the Argentine Committee, see Leandro Lacquaniti: "The Argentine Commission for Intellectual Cooperation: The Itinerary of a Cultural Diplomacy Agency of the Argentine State (1936–1948)", in *Centenary of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations: Book of Abstracts*, ed. Martin Grandjean (Geneva: United Nations Library and Archives / University of Lausanne, 2022), 37–44.

[35] *Europa – América Latina: Comisión Argentina de Cooperación Intelectual* (Buenos Aires: G. J. Pesce y Cía., 1937).

Nevertheless, these reasonings spawned new dilemmas: how could unity and diversity coexist within Western culture? Was there a spiritual unity between Europe and Latin America? Moreover, was Latin American culture just an extension of European culture or did it stand out due to its own physiognomy? If the latter was correct, what were its original features? Finally, were Latin American countries united by a common past and culture?

In the answers given by certain Latin American writers to some of these questions, we can notice a singular operation: the "inscription"[36] of American culture into Greco-Latin culture and the humanist tradition, under a relationship with France, Italy and Spain (and in opposition to the Anglo-Germans).[37] That is to say, at the same time as Latin America's place as inheritor of Western culture was legitimized, the creative will of Latin American countries to found a new tradition that reshaped European values through an original appropriation was highlighted. This reasoning was backed by French writer Georges Duhamel, for whom "the old European spirit has experienced, in the New World, something more than a simple metamorphosis, and even a trans-substantiation".[38]

Something similar was expressed by Alfonso Reyes in his opening lecture delivered at the *Entretien* as a representative of Latin American writers.[39] The Mexican writer and diplomat held that the intellectuals of American countries had "come of age". In this vein, he argued that American nations were not inferior to Europeans as far as their intellect was concerned, and in fact the latter could even learn from the former. Adopting the "style of a lawyer in his closing argument", he concluded: "I now pronounce before the tribunal of international thinkers listening to me: recognize us the right to universal citizenship we have already conquered".[40]

Reyes added in his speech that "if the European economy already needs us, its intelligence will end up needing us too" since "the American intelligence", despite being "less specialized than the European", had an advantage since it was "naturally internationalist":

> This is explained not only by the fact that our America possesses the conditions to be the melting pot of that future "cosmic race" that Vasconcelos has dreamed of, but also because we have had to find our cultural tools in the great European centres, and have thus become used to employing foreign notions as if they were our own. While the European did not need to peer into America to build its world system, the American studies, knows and practices Europe since primary school. Hence a quaint consequence I point to without vanity or anger: in the balance of minor errors or partial lack of understanding in European books that deal with America and in American books that deal with Europe, we come out advantageous.[41]

[36] Silviano Santiago, "El entre-lugar del discurso latinoamericano", in *Una literatura en los trópicos: Ensayos de Silviano Santiago*, ed. Mary Luz Estupiñán and Raúl Rodríguez Freire (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Escaparate, 2012), 57–76.

[37] Martin Grandjean, "A Representative Organization? Ibero-Américan Networks in the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation of the League of Nations (1922–1939)", in *Cultural Organizations, Networks and Mediators in Contemporary Ibero-América*, ed. Diana Roig-Sanz and Jaume Subirana (New York: Routledge, 2020), 65–89.

[38] *Europa – América Latina*, 4.

[39] Beatriz Colombi, "Alfonso Reyes y las 'Notas sobre la inteligencia americana': una lectura en red", *Cuadernos del CILHA* 12, no. 4 (2011): 106–20.

[40] *Europa – América Latina*, 13.

[41] Ibid., 11 and 13.

Reyes's stance was not received favourably by the whole audience. Spanish writer Joan Esterlich reflected on the same point, and his speech seemed to respond directly to the Mexican writer's comments. From a markedly Eurocentric viewpoint, Esterlich argued that:

> At the bottom, what we are trying to find out is if the Americas are growing apart from Europe, or if we want to strengthen the spiritual cooperation between both continents. Most of us have pronounced ourselves for cooperation […] One of the authors of the speeches I have read writes: "Our America repudiates Europe". Europeans ask why. We have been told that here there is a certain feeling of disappointment toward Europe, its culture and its cultured classes; and we Europeans have answered: "We feel the same disappointment". In such conditions, would it not be convenient to take the matter to a different plane, to that of a general disappointment, both American and European, in current culture? Moving forward a bit more, we can distinguish another kind of disappointment in South Americans. It is a political disappointment, a disappointment in the European social organization and methods of government. But European intellectuals answer: "It is not our fault if politics in Europe is bad; if South Americans repudiate it, they have every right to do so; but this is not in any way related to the problem of the unity of culture". I think that we can say: it is possible that Europe has the worst politics; but it is still the part of mankind that has the best intelligence.[42]

Another central issue in the debates, which added tension especially to the controversies among American writers, was that of the unity of Latin American culture.[43] For example, Baldomero Sanín Cano, the Colombian journalist, writer and member of the ICIC from 1931–36, pointed out that there was "no doubt, an American culture, but it has so many different aspects as those that separate Argentinian culture from Mexican culture" so that it is "just a name that lends the appearance of homogeneity".[44] As we can see, the ideal of unity had limits imposed by the historic rivalries between the governments of the continent as well as by the recent conflicts that had taken place in that territory, among them the Chaco War waged between Paraguay and Bolivia from 1932 to 1935. The cherished wish to achieve the union of "Our America" had to overcome the difficulties posed by strong nationalist sentiments that insisted on the differences and the exceptionalities of each of the countries of the continent, and thus hindered Latin American unity.[45]

That was the stance of the Argentinian representative at the congress, Carlos Ibarguren, who in response to the arguments of Pedro Henríquez Ureña denied that the authenticity of Latin American countries should be searched for in the culture of Pre-Hispanic times. From his point of view – unlike in other regions of the Americas – "the problem of the Native American […] does not exist

42 Ibid., 83.

43 Carlos Altamirano, *La invención de Nuestra América. Obsesiones, narrativas y debates sobre la identidad de América Latina*, (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2021), 143–76.

44 *Europa – América Latina*, 219.

45 An anecdote told by Celina Manzoni is symptomatic of this problem: Alfonso Reyes recalled a protest that took place during his days as ambassador in Buenos Aires (he held that position twice, from 1927 to 1930 and from 1936 to 1938). *La Nación* newspaper protested against a municipal regulation that supplied the street cleaners with straw hats to wear during the summer months, because that gave the city a "tropical" physiognomy. See Manzoni, "Buenos Aires 1936", 17.

in our country" and so its presence was insignificant in Argentinian culture.[46] Ibarguren thus held that the genealogy of the shared Latin American history lay in colonial times, at the precise moment of the merger of the cultures of both continents. He added that "lately, especially after the Great War, a marked nationalist sentiment has been born in the peoples both of Europe and the Americas that is not limited to the field of the economy but also pervades that of culture".[47] For that reason, in Argentina "at the present hour, instead of receiving European culture passively, we eagerly seek to find in ourselves our autonomous cultural expression".[48] Exceptionalism and manifest destiny were combined in the nationalist thought of Ibarguren, who imagined a future with Argentina as a regional power and spiritual leader of South America. Of course, the nationalist writer's stance was criticized because his viewpoint contradicted the core principles of a congress like the *Entretien*, that fostered continental and international fraternity.

Conclusion: intellectual cooperation and cultural unity in the crossroads

The general agreement reached in the discussions of the *Entretien* of Buenos Aires in 1936 seemed to ratify the indissolubility of Latin American and European cultures, though some interventions made from more extreme nationalist positions led to certain controversies. In the debates, disagreements surfaced between the group of American writers who held that an American culture existed that, based on a unity of meaning and belonging, eliminated the differences between the American nations, and those who denied or mistrusted the existence of that cultural unity. Moreover, even if most writers defended the legacy of classic Greco-Latin culture and the humanist traditions, others (albeit a minority) sought to distance themselves from that position by positing that the originality of Latin American culture derived from its pre-Columbian past. It was hard to reach an agreement in this respect: the positions of Americanist writers and those of nationalists could collide with each other when it came to providing an accurate definition of Latin American identity.

As the analysis of the speeches at the *Entretien* shows, the debates on the role that Latin America should assume in the turbulent international context were central. In that sense, several aspects merited special reflection: latinity as a nexus between the Americas and Europe; the place that Latin America had to have as refuge of Western culture in case of a military conflagration on the "old continent"; and the decadence of European culture and the supposed "coming of age" of Latin America and its intellectuals.

[46] Henríquez Ureña had maintained that an authentic Americanist tradition was yet to be made and that this was a programme that necessarily had to combine the values inherited from both Pre-Columbian peoples and Hispanic culture. He ruled out any reasoning that considered an alleged inferiority of the Native American to be an obstacle for the spread of Western culture. Because, for the Dominican writer, those who thought so would only reveal their ignorance of the great creations of Pre-Hispanic civilizations. *Europa-América Latina*, 44.

[47] *Europa-América Latina*, 44.

[48] Ibid., 57.

The proposal of both Latin American and European writers was to deepen and widen the bonds of intellectual cooperation that could help ensure peace and understanding between the nations of the Americas and of Europe.[49] As was then argued by the writer Carlos Reyles, representative of the Uruguayan delegation to the *Entretien*, "the disinterested action […] of the International Institute on Intellectual Cooperation, and of other bodies that pursue similar goals, will ennoble the *belles lettres*, influence the orientation and the culture itself, and also, as a consequence, the fate of mankind".[50] These goals seemed to set the agenda of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation, which at the time fostered the creation of national committees in the countries of the Americas. The answers to that call were almost simultaneous in some countries of the region: in 1937, the Argentinian and Brazilian Committees for Intellectual Cooperation started working. By 1939, when the Second World War broke out, nineteen committees for intellectual cooperation linked to the project of the League of Nations had been established. Yet during and after the war, there were further shifts in the importance attributed to Latin America within the landscape of the international intellectual cooperation.[51] These issues continued after the Second World War with the reorganization of global cultural cooperation within the framework of UNESCO, albeit with US and British visions prevailing over the proposals of French and Latin American actors.

[49] At the time, the United States did not have any delegate within the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. Nevertheless, when the event finished, several attendants supported the idea of inviting the United States to participate in this project of intellectual cooperation sponsored by the League of Nations in the immediate future, since they considered that the help of that country and the backing of its writers and intellectuals would strengthen the ICIC's programme and its attempts to consolidate world peace.

[50] *Europa – América Latina*, 212.

[51] Daniel Laqua, "Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order", *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 229; Corinne A. Pernet, "Twists, Turns and Dead Alleys: The League of Nations and Intellectual Cooperation in Times of War", *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 3 (2014): 342–58.

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Photo of the inaugural session of the ICIC, 1 August 1922. *Source:* United Nations Library and Archives, Geneva. Reference P021_01_048.

The construction of a new global order after the First World War required not only political and economic efforts, but also the coordination of scientific and cultural relations on an international scale. To this end, the League of Nations launched a range of initiatives, including the creation of its International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (1922), the foundation of the Paris-based International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (1925–26) as well as the formation of various auxiliary bodies. These ventures aimed to develop a collaborative dynamic around issues as diverse as scientific cooperation, educational means for peace as well as artistic and literary relations. Attracting some of the era's most eminent intellectuals, these initiatives did not lead to the creation of a "League of Minds", as some of the architects of the League of Nations had so eagerly hoped. However, as this volume demonstrates, these efforts did play a key role in the development of cultural diplomacy and in the evolution of transnational fields of action during the interwar period. Moreover, the history of transnational intellectual cooperation in this period illuminates wider issues surrounding international relations and the development of international organizations.

Edited by Martin Grandjean and Daniel Laqua, this book brings together the research of 17 scholars, highlighting the breadth of the League's work in the field of intellectual cooperation and detailing a range of transnational connections across a variety of cultural fields.

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