

# Transnational intellectual cooperation, the League of Nations, and the problem of order\*

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## Abstract

*This article examines the political and cultural contexts of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation and the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation. These two League of Nations bodies were charged with fostering international understanding through the promotion of educational, scientific, and cultural exchange. Whereas previous studies have revealed the institutional and diplomatic processes that shaped these bodies, the present article considers their intellectual genealogies and trajectories. Adopting a transnational perspective, it argues that the multi-layered quest for order is central to understanding intellectual cooperation in the interwar years. This concern was reflected in the role of cultural relations within the post-war order, and in the aim of strengthening intellectuals' position in the social order (both through legal instruments and through new tools for 'intellectual labour').*

**Keywords** civilization, cultural internationalism, education, intellectual cooperation, League of Nations, transnational history

In August 1926, the Geneva Institute of International Relations organized the first in a series of high-profile meetings on 'The problems of peace'. Addressing an audience that included League of Nations staff, scholars, and politicians, the British academic Alfred Zimmern opened the event with a lecture on 'The development of the international mind'. This process, Zimmern suggested, was driven by attitudes that resembled life 'in a room with windows open on a wide prospect over the world'.<sup>1</sup> He himself was involved in promoting such an outlook: as deputy director of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation

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1 Alfred Zimmern, 'The development of the international mind', in Committee of the Geneva Institute of International Relations, *The problems of peace: lectures delivered at the Geneva Institute of International Relations at the Palais des Nations, August 1926*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1927, p. 3.

(Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, IICI), he played a key role in an organization that, under the auspices of the League of Nations, sought to foster ‘a general mentality among the peoples of the world more appropriate to co-operation than the nationalistic mentality of the past’.<sup>2</sup> Only a few months before Zimmern’s speech, the IICI had opened in Paris, financially supported by the French government and led by the former French official Julien Luchaire.

The IICI operated alongside an International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (Commission Internationale de la Coopération Intellectuelle, CICI) which the League of Nations had established in 1922. The CICI initially included twelve members of significant stature in intellectual life. As one observer put it in the 1930s, ‘when scientific qualifications are so high as to include around the same table a Bergson and an Einstein their coming together reminds one of a meeting of Mont Blanc and Mount Everest’.<sup>3</sup> Alongside Albert Einstein and Henri Bergson (the Committee’s first chairman), prominent members included Marie Curie, Hendrik Lorentz, Gilbert Murray, and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. A report adopted by the League of Nations Council in 1923 asserted that CICI members were ‘appointed in consideration of their personal ability and their reputation in learned circles, and without any discrimination as to nationality’.<sup>4</sup> This arrangement meant that the interwar institutions for intellectual cooperation remained open to scholars whose countries were not part of the League of Nations – although national considerations evidently affected the selection of CICI members and IICI staff.<sup>5</sup>

In recent years, historians have reassessed the League’s role in the international politics of the interwar years, exploring aspects and activities that have previously been overlooked or underestimated.<sup>6</sup> Renewed scholarly interest in the League has extended to the field of intellectual cooperation: Jean-Jacques Renoliet has offered a detailed account of the Organisation of Intellectual Cooperation, a body that comprised the IICI, the CICI, National Committees of Intellectual Cooperation, specialized bodies, and advisory committees.<sup>7</sup> His

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- 2 F. S. Northedge, *The League of Nations: its life and times, 1920–1946*, Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1986, p. 189.
  - 3 H. R. G. Greaves: *The League committees and world order: a study of the Permanent Expert Committees of the League of Nations as an instrument of international government*, London: Oxford University Press, 1931, p. 133.
  - 4 League of Nations Archives, United Nations Library, Geneva (henceforth LNA), 13C, doss. 28370, doc. 31904, *Intellectual co-operation: report by M. Hanotaux adopted by the Council on December 13th, 1923, XXVIIe Session du Conseil: Paris, décembre 1923*, 13C.
  - 5 I examine the role of national interests and ideas in a separate article: Daniel Laqua, ‘Internationalisme ou affirmation de la nation? La coopération intellectuelle transnationale dans l’entre-deux-guerres’, *Critique Internationale*, no. 52, 2011.
  - 6 Susan Pedersen, ‘Back to the League of Nations?’, *American Historical Review*, 112, 4, 2007, pp. 1091–1117; Patricia Clavin, ‘Europe and the League of Nations’, in Robert Gerwarth, ed., *Twisted Paths: Europe, 1914–1945*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 325–54. In the run-up to its centenary, the International Labour Organization has launched its Century Project: for a survey of recent research, see Jasmien Van Daele, ‘The International Labour Organization (ILO) in past and present research’, *International Review of Social History*, 53, 3, 2008, pp. 485–511.
  - 7 Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L’UNESCO oubliée: la Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle, 1919–1946*, Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999. Cf. F. S. Northedge, ‘International intellectual co-operation within the League of Nations: its conceptual basis and lessons for the present’, PhD thesis, University of London, 1953; Jan Kolasa, *International intellectual cooperation: the League experience and the beginnings of UNESCO*, Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im Ossolinskich, 1962.

description of this organization as the ‘forgotten UNESCO’ seems apt, with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization beginning its operations from within the former IICI premises. Launched in 2005, the ‘UNESCO History Project’ has acknowledged the role of its pre-1945 precursor.<sup>8</sup> Akira Iriye has adopted a broader chronological perspective, interpreting intellectual cooperation in the interwar years as one manifestation of ‘cultural internationalism’, a term that describes efforts ‘to link countries and peoples through the exchange of ideas and persons, through scholarly cooperation, or through efforts at facilitating cross-national understanding’.<sup>9</sup>

Renoliet’s monograph and earlier studies by Northedge and Kolasa have shed light on the institutional histories of the IICI and the CICI and on the rapport of these bodies with the League of Nations system. Additional research has examined specific aspects of intellectual cooperation, from the policies of individual countries to activities such as the International Studies Conferences.<sup>10</sup> One particular aspect, however, requires further examination: the IICI and the CICI were supposed to engage with an amorphous and sometimes ill-defined constituency, namely intellectuals. These League bodies were hence more than diplomatic entities; they involved individuals who combined scholarly or artistic activity with a commitment to public intervention.<sup>11</sup> Instead of covering institutional developments, my article therefore focuses on the intellectual genealogies and trajectories of the IICI and the CICI. This approach resonates with efforts to capture the intellectual history of the United Nations,<sup>12</sup> and with research that considers the interaction between international organizations and non-state actors as a topic of ‘transnational history’.<sup>13</sup> Significantly, transnational history, intellectual history, and the history of intellectuals all aim beyond an institutional focus; they are concerned with transmission processes, flows, and networks that are often fragile or temporary in nature.<sup>14</sup>

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- 8 UNESCO, *60 ans d'histoire: actes du colloque international, 16–18 novembre 2005*, Paris: UNESCO, 2007.
- 9 Akira Iriye, *Cultural internationalism and world order*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997, p. 3.
- 10 Werner Scholz, ‘Frankreichs Rolle bei der Schaffung der Völkerbundkommission für internationale intellektuelle Zusammenarbeit 1919–1922’, *Francia*, 21, 3, 1994, pp. 145–59; Michael J. Riemens, *De passie voor vrede: de evolutie van de internationale politieke cultuur in de jaren 1880–1940 en het recipieren door Nederland*, Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 2005; idem, ‘International academic cooperation on international relations in the interwar period: the International Studies Conference’, *Review of International Studies*, 37, 2011, pp. 911–28.
- 11 On the term’s origins in the Dreyfus Affair, see e.g. Jeremy Jennings and Anthony Kemp-Walsh, ‘The century of the intellectual: from the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie’, in Jeremy Jennings and Anthony Kemp-Walsh, eds., *Intellectuals in politics: from the Dreyfus Affair to Salman Rushdie*, London: Routledge, 1997, pp. 1–24. As Collini has emphasized, political engagement was also a concern for British intellectuals: Stefan Collini, *Absent minds: intellectuals in Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- 12 An overview of the United Nations Intellectual History Project is available at <http://www.unhistory.org> (consulted 17 March 2011).
- 13 Patricia Clavin, ‘Defining transnationalism’, *Contemporary European History*, 14, 4, 2005, pp. 421–39.
- 14 Christophe Charle, Jürgen Schriewer, and Peter Wagner, eds., *Transnational intellectual networks: forms of academic knowledge and the search for cultural identities*, Frankfurt: Campus, 2004; Emma Rothschild, ‘Arcs of ideas: international history and intellectual history’, in Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, and Oliver Janz, eds., *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006, pp. 217–26.

A contextual examination of the League's work for intellectual cooperation reveals a concern for order at every level. As Akira Iriye has shown, ideas about global order were an inherent feature of cultural internationalism.<sup>15</sup> The relationship between internationalism and order has also been stressed in connection with the 'historical turn' in the study of international relations.<sup>16</sup> Intellectual cooperation was viewed as a tool for transforming the international order, yet its wide-ranging ambitions were subject to intrinsic boundaries. After considering the global dimensions of intellectual cooperation, this article therefore investigates other levels where the quest for order became evident: within a regional context (Europe's post-war order), within one particular strand of intellectual cooperation (education), and in the attempt to define the social and international position of one particular group (intellectual workers). This multi-layered approach can help us trace an 'intellectual order' in the making – defined here as a systematic structure that encompassed international relations, the classification of ideas, and an assigned role for intellectuals. As a whole, the article tackles a key problem in the intellectual history of the IICI and the CICI: while these bodies were vessels for efforts to create order, they depended on existing hierarchies. In other words, intellectual cooperation relied on the very structures that it sought to transform.

## Intellectual cooperation and a new international order

The League of Nations was part of the attempt to create a new international order after four years of conflict. This new order did not depend on political structures alone: it also required efforts in the intellectual sphere. A contributor to *L'Esprit International*, the publication of the European Centre of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, stressed the impetus that the Great War had provided for intellectual cooperation:

It is not one of the war's less important and less curious consequences that it has inspired a need for the spiritual and moral rapprochement of peoples, for the reciprocal understanding of their ideas and sentiments, for precise and disinterested knowledge about the events in which they intersect or of which they suffer the repercussions.<sup>17</sup>

Initially, this drive towards intellectual cooperation found little resonance among the League's architects, since the Covenant of the League of Nations had not included stipulations for intellectual cooperation. However, removed from diplomatic constraints, intellectuals launched manifold initiatives for transnational exchange. In 1918, the French author Romain Rolland began to promote 'L'Internationale de l'Esprit'; in the same year, his

15 Iriye, *Cultural internationalism*, e.g. p. 12.

16 Duncan Bell, ed., *Victorian visions of global order: empire and international relations in nineteenth-century political thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007; Brian C. Schmidt, *The political discourse of anarchy: a disciplinary history of international history*, Albany, NY: State of New York University Press, 1998; Nick Vaughan-Williams, 'International relations and the "problem of history"', *Millennium*, 34, 1, 2005, pp. 115–36.

17 Camille Bloch, 'Centres de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine', *L'Esprit International: The International Mind*, no. 3, 1927, p. 350.

compatriot Henri Barbusse established *Clarté* as both a periodical and an international movement of intellectuals.<sup>18</sup> In Germany, the author Heinrich Mann spoke of an ‘alliance of intellectuals of all nations’, while the ‘Council of Intellectual Workers’ – founded by the pacifist and expressionist literary critic Kurt Hiller – presented its views on the future international order. In 1922, the Austrian aristocrat Karl Anton Rohan founded the Fédération Internationale des Unions Intellectuelles (or Europäischer Kulturbund), which has been described as the ‘most important intellectual network on the continent’.<sup>19</sup>

The idea that intellectual cooperation should be part of the League’s remit was exemplified by a Belgian proposal for an ‘intellectual League of Nations’.<sup>20</sup> During the *belle époque*, the scheme’s authors – the Nobel Peace laureate Henri La Fontaine and the bibliographer Paul Otlet – had founded the International Institute of Bibliography and the Union of International Associations. After the war, they established the Palais Mondial in Brussels, conceiving this ‘world palace’ as the nucleus of the new League body.<sup>21</sup> Although their hopes were ultimately frustrated, the two Belgians triggered the first League discussions on intellectual cooperation and are therefore acknowledged as important figures in the CICI’s pre-history.<sup>22</sup> The pre-war origins of their efforts suggest underlying continuities of cultural and scientific internationalism: the decades before 1914 had seen an ever-growing number of scientific congresses, as well as the foundation of international journals and other vehicles for intellectual exchange.<sup>23</sup> A report that prepared the CICI’s establishment – written by Léon Bourgeois, the French representative on the League Council – recognized the developments before 1919: ‘if an international intellectual life had not been long existent our League would never have been formed’.<sup>24</sup>

Despite such continuities, cultural internationalism underwent significant changes after the First World War: as Akira Iriye has stressed, ‘*International* was . . . more globally construed than before the war.’<sup>25</sup> Writing in 1931, Alfred Zimmern seemed to describe these developments:

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- 18 See e.g. Guessler Normand, ‘Henri Barbusse and his *Monde* (1928–35): progeny of the *Clarté* movement and the review *Clarté*’, *Journal of Contemporary History*, 11, 1, 1976, pp. 173–97.
- 19 Guido Müller, ‘France and Germany after the Great War: businessmen, intellectuals and artists in non-governmental European networks’, in Jessica Gienow-Hecht and Frank Schumacher, eds., *Culture and international history*, New York: Berghahn, 2003, p. 104. For a detailed treatment of Rohan’s activities, see Guido Müller, *Europäische Gesellschaftsbeziehungen nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg: das deutsch-französische Studienkomitee und der Europäische Kulturbund*, Munich: Oldenbourg, 2005. Interestingly, Rohan did not use a direct parallel in the French and German titles, employing ‘International Federation of Intellectual Unions’ and ‘European Cultural Union’ respectively.
- 20 Paul Otlet, *La société intellectuelle des nations*, Paris: Alcan, 1919 (= extract from *Scientia*, 25, 1919).
- 21 The pioneering study of Otlet’s work is Boyd Rayward, *The universe of information: the work of Paul Otlet for documentation and international organisation*, Moscow: FID, 1975. On the Belgians’ efforts before 1914, see Daniel Laqua, ‘Transnational endeavours and the “totality of knowledge”: Paul Otlet and Henri La Fontaine as “integral internationalists” in fin-de-siècle Europe’, in Grace Brockington, ed., *Internationalism and the arts in Britain and Europe at the fin de siècle*, Oxford: Peter Lang, 2009, pp. 247–71.
- 22 Renoliet, *L’UNESCO oubliée*, pp. 11–17.
- 23 Anne Rasmussen, ‘L’internationale scientifique, 1870–1914’, PhD thesis, EHESS Paris, 1995.
- 24 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, p. 3.
- 25 Iriye, *Cultural internationalism*, p. 58.

international relations are no longer only carried on, as they used to be in the West, between nominally Christian peoples. The so-called Family of States which is supposed to be bound by the rules of International Law includes several for whose rulers and peoples the Christian tradition, of which that body of law was an outgrowth, has no meaning whatsoever – except perhaps as reminder of the deviation between Western professions and Western practice.<sup>26</sup>

The shift in the scope and nature of internationalism manifested itself in several ways. For instance, in examining the campaigns of anti-colonial nationalists from India, Egypt, China, and Korea, Erez Manela has observed the ‘expansion of international society’.<sup>27</sup> The League of Nations’ global reach was exemplified by the work of its Mandates section, which has recently attracted fresh scholarly interest.<sup>28</sup> At a different level, international women’s organizations sought to broaden their membership base beyond Europe and North America in this period.<sup>29</sup>

Given the alleged universalism of science and the arts, intellectual cooperation seemed well equipped to reflect the expansion of internationalism. One of the main supporters of the IICI within the League of Nations Secretariat was its most senior non-Western official, Under Secretary-General Inazō Nitobe.<sup>30</sup> In his memoirs, Jules Luchaire praised Nitobe for providing more encouragement than Eric Drummond and Drummond’s successor, Joseph Avenol.<sup>31</sup> Moreover, the CICI’s composition suggests a gradual broadening beyond the West. The committee’s initial membership of twelve intellectuals included the Indian political economist D. N. Banerjee and the Brazilian medic Aloysio de Castro. By 1939, the number of non-Western members had risen to six out of eighteen. Despite Japan’s withdrawal from the League, the literary scholar Masaharu Anesaki, who had joined the CICI in 1933, remained involved for six more years,<sup>32</sup> and the Japanese Commission for Intellectual Cooperation continued operations.<sup>33</sup> In the case of China, the influential thinker Hu Shi served as a corresponding CICI member from 1925, gaining full membership in 1930. A

26 Alfred Zimmern, *Prospects of civilization*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939, p. 13.

27 Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian moment: self-determination and the international origins of anti-colonial nationalism*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 5.

28 Michael Callahan, *Mandates and empire: the League of Nations and Africa, 1914–1931*, Portland, OR: Sussex Academic Press, 1999; idem, *A sacred trust: the League of Nations and Africa, 1929–1946*, Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2004; Susan Pedersen, ‘The meaning of the Mandates system: an argument’, *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 32, 4, 2006, pp. 560–82; eadem, ‘Metaphors of the schoolroom: women working the Mandates system of the League of Nations’, *History Workshop Journal*, 66, 2008, pp. 188–207.

29 Marie Sandell, ‘A real meeting of the women of the East and West: women and internationalism in the interwar period’, in Daniel Laqua (ed.), *Internationalism reconfigured: transnational ideas and movements between the World Wars*, London: I.B. Tauris, 2011, pp. 161–85; Fiona Paisley, *Glamour in the Pacific: cultural internationalism and race politics in the women’s Pan-Pacific*, Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai’i Press, 2009.

30 Nitobe, a Japanese Christian, has been described as ‘Japan’s foremost internationalist before the war’: Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism*, p. 65.

31 Julien Luchaire, *Confession d’un français moyen*, Florence: Leo. S. Olschiki, vol. 2, pp. 85–6.

32 Anesaki was preceded by the physicist Aikitsu Tanakadate, who sat on the CICI from 1926 to 1933.

33 IICI Archives, UNESCO, Paris, A.XI.13: *Relations diverses avec le Japon*, Letter to Junzo Sato, 14 May 1937.

Chinese Committee for Intellectual Cooperation was set up in 1933; its chairman also inaugurated a Sino-International Library in Geneva, conceived as a meeting point for Chinese and European culture.<sup>34</sup> The Japanese and Chinese examples underline a comparative advantage of the League mechanisms for intellectual cooperation: namely the openness to non-League members. This flexibility also facilitated US involvement in the CICI and the IICI, starting with the membership of George E. Hale, director of the Mount Wilson Observatory. The United States had its own National Committee for Intellectual Cooperation, and American foundations helped to fund the IICI's International Studies Conferences.<sup>35</sup>

US protagonists of transnational intellectual cooperation maintained links with Latin American intellectuals who had developed their own patterns of intellectual cooperation, both through the League and through the Pan-American Union. Inter-American Conferences on Intellectual Cooperation took place in Santiago (1939) and in Havana (1941).<sup>36</sup> After the first event, the secretary-general of the Chilean Committee for Intellectual Cooperation was invited to Paris to present the results of the event; a similar procedure was proposed for the Havana conference.<sup>37</sup> Despite the war, the conference in Cuba took place in November 1941, creating a 'committee of seven' that included such notable figures as the Brazilian CICI member and scientist Miguel Ozorio de Almeida, the Mexican author and diplomat Alfonso Reyes, and the US historian and former CICI member James T. Shotwell.<sup>38</sup> In light of the German occupation of Paris, the conference offered to relocate the IICI to Latin America or to establish an International Provisional Centre in the Americas. However, it was not until October 1944 that a meeting of the 'committee of seven' took place, assisted by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. By the time plans for a Provisional Centre were advanced, the Institute in Paris had resumed its activities.

## Global order as a dialogue between civilizations

Despite its potential role as a global instrument, intellectual cooperation was subject to inherent limitations, exemplified by an attachment to categories such as civilization, race, empire, and nationhood. Many protagonists of intellectual cooperation viewed global order as a dialogue between 'civilizations'. The cultural and political thought of Gilbert Murray and Alfred Zimmern is a case in point: both were leading figures in the League's work for intellectual cooperation, and both were classicists whose research on Greek and Roman civilization influenced their views on the international order.<sup>39</sup> Other protagonists of

34 Susanne Kuß, *Der Völkerbund und China: technische Kooperation und deutsche Berater, 1928–1934*, Münster: LIT, 2005, pp. 69–72. See also Françoise Kreissler, 'L'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle et la Chine: un partenariat privilégié?', in UNESCO, *60s ans d'histoire*, pp. 89–91.

35 Katharina Rietzler, 'Experts for peace: structures and motivations of philanthropic internationalism in the interwar years', in Laqua, *Internationalism reconfigured*, pp. 52–7.

36 See IICI Archives, A.III.68: *2e Conférence des C.N. américaines, La Havane*.

37 *Ibid.*, letter from Daniel Secretan, 25 April 1939.

38 *Ibid.*, letter sent from Rio de Janeiro, 6 October 1945.

39 Jeanne Morefield, *Covenants without swords: idealist liberalism and the spirit of empire*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005; Julia Stapleton, 'The classicist as a liberal intellectual: Gilbert Murray and Alfred Eckhard Zimmern', in Christopher Stray, ed., *Gilbert Murray re-assessed: Hellenism*,

intellectual cooperation also stressed the significance of a shared heritage. The Swiss conservative Gonzague de Reynold – a CICI member throughout the committee’s existence – wrote an eight-volume work on *La formation de l’Europe*, tracing the emergence of a shared European culture.<sup>40</sup> Outside the League framework, the 1927 congress of the Fédération Internationale des Unions Intellectuelles placed much emphasis on the significance of the European past: Oskar Halecki examined history as the ‘raison d’être of nations’, and Albrecht Mendelssohn Bartholdy, director of the Hamburg Institute for Foreign Policy (Institut für Auswärtige Politik) considered the role of history in European consciousness.<sup>41</sup> Although such discussions did not preclude a consideration of global cooperation, they expressed regional allegiances that were often defined in cultural terms.

The focus on a common past was not an issue for European intellectuals alone. This is illustrated by the writings of the Peruvian intellectual Francisco García Calderón, who sat on the CICI from 1936 to 1939. His early work *Latin America: its rise and progress* discussed the ‘Latin spirit’, whose defence he portrayed as a ‘duty of primordial importance’.<sup>42</sup> García Calderón argued that Latin Americans had to be alert to a ‘Teutonic invasion’ of Latin America, ‘Yankee imperialism’, and the ‘imperialistic designs’ of Japan ‘in the mysterious Orient’.<sup>43</sup> Stressing that ‘No other continent offers so many reasons for union’, he proposed to organize the Latin American states into several regional confederations.<sup>44</sup> Underlining his concern with the notion of a shared Latin American culture, García Calderón was involved in the CICI’s publication of a *Collection ibéro-américaine*, which comprised translations of several ‘classic’ Latin American texts. Gabriela Mistral, who had worked for the IICI and been actively involved in this venture, did not think that such undertakings showed a genuine League commitment to Latin America. Apart from the publication project, she did not believe that ‘these organizations have done anything for Latin America. . . . Those monies have only served European culture.’<sup>45</sup>

In pursuing a global dialogue, the IICI required partners that could be viewed as representatives of civilization. For instance, the prominent role of Latin American states in the IICI drove on an underlying continuity of cultural internationalism, namely their portrayal

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*theatre, and international politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 261–92; Mark Mazower, *No enchanted palace: the end of empire and the ideological origins of the United Nations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009, pp. 66–103; John Toye and Richard Toye, ‘One world, two cultures? Alfred Zimmern, Julian Huxley and the ideological origins of UNESCO’, *History*, 95, 319, 2010, pp. 308–31.

40 Gonzague de Reynold, *La formation de l’Europe*, 8 vols., Fribourg and Paris: Librairie de l’Université/Plon, 1944–59.

41 Fédération Internationale des Unions Intellectuelles, ‘Xe rapport du secrétariat général: IVe assemblée à Heidelberg et Francfort s./M., le 20, 21, 22 octobre 1927’, in LNA, 13C, doss. 61990, doc. 34468, *Collaboration entre la Commission Internationale de Coopération Intellectuelle et la Fédération Internationale des Unions Intellectuelles*.

42 Francisco García Calderón, *Latin America: its rise and progress: with a preface by Raymond Poincaré*, transl. Bernard Miall, London: Unwin, 1913, p. 289. On ideas of Latin America and nationhood, see Nicola Miller, *In the shadow of the state: intellectuals and the quest for national identity in twentieth-century Spanish America*, London: Verso, 1999.

43 García Calderón, *Latin America*, pp. 290, 298, and 323–4 respectively.

44 *Ibid.*, pp. 339 and 343 respectively.

45 Elizabeth Horan and Doris Meyer, eds., *This America of ours: the letters of Gabriela Mistral and Victoria Ocampo*, Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003, p. 98.



as members of ‘the “civilized” community of nations’.<sup>46</sup> When Julien Luchaire visited Cairo prior to Egypt’s affiliation to the Institute, he sought to stress the country’s civilizational achievements, noting that ‘this soil contains the remnants of the most ancient civilization that the world has known and that has continued over the centuries with a constancy that no other civilisation has known’.<sup>47</sup> These views were reiterated when Luchaire’s successor, Henri Bonnet, returned to Cairo in 1931: a Francophone Egyptian periodical suggested that Egypt could serve as a ‘spokesman of the great civilization that it protects’.<sup>48</sup> Even when aiming for a ‘decentralization of the system of intellectual cooperation’ during its re-launch preparations in 1945, the IICI expressed notions of a civilizational dialogue, seeking ‘ambassadors of culture in different countries or groups of countries with different cultures’.<sup>49</sup>

Such ‘thinking in civilizations’ was exemplified by several publications in the 1930s: the IICI series on *Civilisations* sought to demonstrate the global dimension of intellectual cooperation. The most prominent volume was *East and West*, based on a correspondence between Gilbert Murray and the Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore.<sup>50</sup> Over a decade earlier, Tagore had affirmed the benefits of such dialogue:

If we can come into real touch with the West through the disinterested medium of intellectual co-operation, we shall gain a true perspective of the human world, realize our own position in it, and have faith in the possibility of widening and deepening our connection with it. We ought to know that a perfect isolation for life and culture is not a thing of which any race can be proud . . . Greece was not shut up in the solitude of her culture, nor was India, when she was in the full radiance of her glory.<sup>51</sup>

It is perhaps fitting that Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan’s membership of the CICI (1931–38) covered the period in which *Civilisations* was published. A contemporary observer described him as a ‘*liaison* officer between two civilizations’; this became obvious with his Hibbert Lectures at University College London, which ‘constituted an event even in the crowded life of London’.<sup>52</sup> A book that collected Radhakrishnan’s lectures as Professor of Eastern Religion and Ethics at the University of Oxford was entitled *Eastern religions and Western thought*. The themes of this collection ranged from ‘the Greek spirit’, through ‘mysticism and ethics in Hindu thought’, to ‘the meeting of religions’.<sup>53</sup> The way in which Radhakrishnan framed his discussion mirrored the discourse adopted by other cultural internationalists:

46 Iriye, *Cultural internationalism*, p. 35.

47 IICI Archives, A.XI.31: *Relations diverses avec l’Egypte*, Luchaire to Drummond, 28 December 1927.

48 *Ibid.*, ‘L’Egypte et la coopération intellectuelle’, *Le Caire*, 16 March 1931.

49 IICI Archives, A.XI.23: *Relations diverses avec le Brésil*, Jean-Jacques Mayout to Dominique Braga, 19 October 1945.

50 Gilbert Murray and Rabindranath Tagore, *East and West*, Paris: IICI, 1935. There were unsuccessful efforts to solicit a Japanese contribution to this series: IICI Archives, A.XI.13: *Relations diverses avec le Japon*, Bonnet to Masayuki Yokoyama, 6 November 1933.

51 Letter to C. F. Andrews, 10 May 1921, in Rabindranath Tagore, *Selected writings of Rabindranath Tagore: a miscellany*, New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1996, p. 305.

52 C. E. M. Joad, *Counter attack from the East: the philosophy of Radhakrishnan*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1933, pp. 39 and 37 respectively.

53 Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Eastern religions and Western thought*, 2nd edn, London: Humphrey Milford and Oxford University Press, 1940.

The obstacles to the organization of human society in an international commonwealth are in the minds of men who have not developed the sense of duty they owe to each other. . . . The supreme task of our generation is to give a soul to the growing world consciousness to develop ideals and institutions necessary for the creative expression of the world soul, to transmit these loyalties and impulses to future generations and train them into world citizens.<sup>54</sup>

With civilization viewed as a building block of global order, it is evident why the term ‘cosmopolitanism’ – often understood as an embrace of diversity and difference – does not capture the nature of cultural internationalism in the interwar years.<sup>55</sup> Its inherent boundaries were underlined by the ambiguous role of race in intellectual cooperation. In 1911, the Universal Races Congress had shown that internationalism and cosmopolitanism could intersect.<sup>56</sup> Held in London, the event brought together over a thousand participants to discuss various aspects of ‘culture’ and ‘race’.<sup>57</sup> Robert John Holton has interpreted the meeting as a shift away from a ‘biological theory of race’ and paternalistic attitudes vis-à-vis non-Westerners.<sup>58</sup> W. E. B. Du Bois, who had recently become the head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, celebrated the congress as a challenge to older convictions on ‘race’ and hence a rebuttal of essentialist notions: he claimed that ‘Of the two thousand international meetings that have taken place in the last seventy-five years there have been few that have so touched the imagination as the Universal Races Congress’.<sup>59</sup> In 1928, a committee of ‘people interested in the problem of the rapprochement of races’ launched plans for a follow-up congress.<sup>60</sup> The IICI, however, remained wary of this project. The head of the Institute’s Section for Scientific Relations, for instance, stressed the need to establish the committee’s scientific credentials. He suggested that the Dutch member of this new committee, the anthropologist Herman Bernelot Moens, was not well known in scholarly circles.<sup>61</sup> Moens had previously attracted controversy for his view that interethnic marriage would result in the ‘perfection of man’; he had also founded an association for

54 *Ibid.*, p. viii.

55 For a survey of approaches to cosmopolitanism, see Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, ‘Introduction: conceiving cosmopolitanism’, in Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, eds., *Conceiving cosmopolitanism: theory, context, and practice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002, pp. 1–22.

56 Robert John Holton, ‘Cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanisms? The Universal Races Congress of 1911’, *Global Networks*, 2, 2, 2002, pp. 153–70. See also Marilyn Lake, ‘Universal Races Congress’, in Akira Iriye and Pierre-Yves Saunier, eds., *Palgrave Dictionary of Transnational History*, Basingstoke: Palgrave, pp. 1079–80.

57 First Universal Races Congress, *Papers on inter-racial problems: First Universal Races Congress: London 26–29 July 1911*, London, 1911. The *New York Times* called it ‘one of the most unique gatherings ever held’: ‘Universal Races Congress’, *New York Times*, 13 June 1911.

58 Holton, ‘Cosmopolitanism or cosmopolitanisms?’, p. 162.

59 W.E.B. Du Bois, ‘The First Universal Races Congress. Presented in 1911 at a conference in London’, in Phil Zuckerman, ed., *The Social Theory of W. E. B. Du Bois*, London: Sage, 2005, p. 26. On Du Bois’s challenging of the concept of ‘race’, see Anthony Appiah, ‘The uncompleted argument: Du Bois and the illusion of race’, *Critical Inquiry*, 12, 1, 1985, pp. 21–37.

60 IICI Archives, *D.IV.11: Congrès des Races*, letter from Ivan Efremov, 27 March 1928.

61 *Ibid.*, Note by J. E. de Vos van Steenwijk, 29 March 1928.

'Universal Brotherhood' (Universeele Broederschap).<sup>62</sup> Alongside Moens, the committee involved well-connected individuals such as the art critic Jules Rais and Ivan Efremov, a Russian IICI official whose earlier involvement in internationalist ventures had ranged from the Interparliamentary Union to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. With the committee planning an 'Interracial Union' or a 'Union for the Rapprochement of Races',<sup>63</sup> Luchaire concluded that 'the project of a congress of races seems to be full of dangers'.<sup>64</sup> Thus, despite its professed universalism, intellectual cooperation implied clear hierarchies. As Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga have pointed out, a change in the treatment of 'race' within the context of intellectual cooperation only emerged after the Second World War.<sup>65</sup>

Racial preconceptions coincided with another boundary of cultural internationalism: empire. The reluctance to challenge imperial power relations became evident when the internationalists La Fontaine and Otlet established relations with W. E. B. Du Bois, who described the two Belgians as 'personal friends'.<sup>66</sup> Du Bois, La Fontaine, and Otlet worked together to prepare the Pan-African Congress of 1921. After the congress opening in London, its delegates travelled to Brussels and then onwards to Paris. The meeting in the Belgian capital, taking place at La Fontaine and Otlet's Palais Mondial, has been described as 'the most important of the three sessions'.<sup>67</sup> Yet it ended acrimoniously, owing to its different sub-texts: Marcus Garvey's 'Back to Africa' movement, Bolshevik anti-imperialism, and Belgian colonialism in the Congo.<sup>68</sup> La Fontaine and Otlet subsequently shied away from activities that would seem to challenge colonial boundaries. Nonetheless, the French ambassador warned against official backing for the Belgians' internationalist ventures and referred to their apparent support for anti-colonial movements in this context.<sup>69</sup> Such examples indicate one of the problems of intellectual cooperation: it sought to address issues of global order in its references to 'civilizations' but – at least in semi-official settings – rarely tackled the more delicate issues of race and empire. Significantly, as Bruce Mazlish has emphasized, race and empire could themselves inform and shape understandings of 'civilization'.<sup>70</sup>

62 Cf. Herman Marie Bernelot Moens, *Towards perfect man: contributions to somatological and philosophical anthropology*, New York: n.p., 1922. Piet de Rooy, 'Moens, Herman Marie (1875–1938)', in *Biografisch woordenboek van Nederland*, <http://www.inghist.nl/Onderzoek/Projecten/BWN/lemmata/bwn4/moens> (consulted 9 November 2009); Donna M. Wells, 'The Moens affair: Washington between the wars', in Thomas Battle and Donna M. Wells, eds., *Legacy: treasures of black history*, Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2006.

63 IICI Archives, *D.IV.11: Congrès des Races*, Note (for Weiss), 12 June 1928.

64 *Ibid.*, Note by Julien Luchaire, 4 March 1928.

65 Sunil Amrith and Glenda Sluga, 'New histories of the United Nations', *Journal of World History*, 19, 2, 2008, pp. 251–74. Cf. Glenda Sluga, 'Introduction', in UNESCO, *60 ans d'histoire*, p. 58.

66 David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois: The fight for equality and the American Century 1919–1963*, New York: Henry Holt, 2000, p. 38.

67 *Ibid.*, p. 38. On the first Pan-African Congress, see C. G. Conte, 'Du Bois, the NAACP, and the Pan-African Congress of 1919', *Journal of Negro History*, 57, 1, 1972, pp. 13–28.

68 Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois*, pp. 42–4.

69 Scholz, 'Frankreichs Rolle', p. 153.

70 Bruce Mazlish, *Civilization and its contents*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004.

## Intellectual cooperation and post-war order

If the global scope of intellectual cooperation was curtailed by its underlying civilizational categories, what about constructing order on a more limited scale? Could intellectual cooperation help to overcome the wartime divisions in Europe? From one angle, this seemed possible: after all, science appeared to have intrinsic transnational features, with cooperation constituting an underlying feature of scholarly endeavour.<sup>71</sup> Expressing this view, Jules Payot, educator and rector of the University of Aix-Marseille, claimed that ‘any object of study, even the most humble one ... includes the universal law that alone has made society and progress possible: the law of reciprocal help, of occupation, of work in solidarity’.<sup>72</sup> However, even before 1914, in ‘the golden age of [scientific] internationalism’,<sup>73</sup> science and the arts were subject to constant tensions between national and transnational forces.<sup>74</sup> The power of national allegiances became evident in 1914, as many intellectuals supported their governments’ war policies.<sup>75</sup> Illustrating the deep animosities caused by the Great War, Jules Payot claimed that the German people ‘in their entirety’ had been ‘poisoned by an education of superciliousness’, whereas French writers had not been blinded by nationalism.<sup>76</sup> This portrayal contrasted with the analysis of the German scholar Ernst R. Curtius, who suggested that German intellectuals had re-oriented themselves towards Europe after the war, whereas their French counterparts had stuck to notions of cultural superiority.<sup>77</sup>

Germany’s role in the international order soon emerged as a key challenge for intellectual cooperation. Some cultural internationalists viewed such cooperation as a disinterested medium that could facilitate German involvement in League activities. In 1926, Alfred Zimmern portrayed this policy as successful, claiming that the ‘academic Locarno’ had become an ‘accomplished fact before the political Locarno’.<sup>78</sup> Yet Zimmern’s comments ignored Germany’s exclusion from the International Research Council and the International Union of the Academies, and a ‘counter-boycott’ by German

71 Brigitte Schroeder-Gudehus, ‘Nationalism and internationalism’, in Robert C. Olby et al., eds., *Companion to the history of modern science*, London: Routledge, 1990, pp. 909–19.

72 Jules Payot, *Le travail intellectuel et la volonté*, Paris: Alcan, 1930, p. 30.

73 Elisabeth Crawford, *Nationalism and internationalism in science, 1880–1939: four studies of the Nobel population*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 61.

74 On the relationship between science and the nation, see Ralph Jessen and Jakob Vogel, eds., *Wissenschaft und Nation in der europäischen Geschichte*, Frankfurt: Campus, 2002. On visual art and national identity, see e.g. Michelle Facos and Sharon Hirsh, eds., *Art, culture and national identity in fin-de-siècle Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003; Eric Storm, ‘Painting regional identities: nationalism in the arts, France, Germany and Spain, 1890–1914’, *European History Quarterly*, 39, 4, 2009, pp. 557–82.

75 See Jürgen von Ungern-Sternberg, *Der Aufruf ‘An die Kulturwelt!’: das Manifest der 93 und die Anfänge der Kulturpropaganda im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Stuttgart: Steiner, 1996.

76 Payot, *Le travail intellectuel*, pp. 30–1.

77 Ernst R. Curtius, *Der Syndikalismus der Geistesarbeiter in Frankreich*, Bonn: Verlag Friedrich Cohen, 1921.

78 Alfred Zimmern, ‘The League and international intellectual co-operation’, in Committee of the Geneva Institute of International Relations, *Problems of peace*, p. 150.

institutions.<sup>79</sup> Contrary to Zimmern's optimistic assessment, Elisabeth Crawford has stressed that a 'relative normalisation' of scientific relations only became possible after Locarno.<sup>80</sup> Albert Einstein's membership of the CICI illustrates these ambiguities: although he had joined the committee four years before Germany's accession to the League, his involvement was marked by disagreements regarding the policy towards Germany and by criticism from German scholars who did not regard the pacifist physicist as a sufficiently 'national' figure.<sup>81</sup>

The ambivalent stance vis-à-vis Germany became evident at many stages in the League's work for intellectual cooperation. In February 1924, for instance, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson – pacifist, historian, and Fellow of King's College, Cambridge – attacked a CICI funding appeal for universities in financial need, objecting to the 'scandalous omission' of Germany.<sup>82</sup> Gilbert Murray echoed this criticism in *The Times*.<sup>83</sup> In response, the Swiss CICI member Gonzague de Reynold drafted a memorandum that detailed his efforts 'to re-establish relations that had been severed by the war'.<sup>84</sup> However, as chair of the CICI, Henri Bergson strongly opposed the publication of Reynold's response. The French philosopher claimed that the document gave the misleading impression 'that we desire and consider possible the immediate re-establishment of normal relations with German science'.<sup>85</sup>

Renoliet's monograph briefly discusses this episode, with a focus on Bergson's views.<sup>86</sup> Yet the responses of League personnel are just as instructive. Acting as the CICI's secretary in Geneva, the Polish historian Oskar Halecki played a key role: he corresponded with Lowes Dickinson, stressing that the CICI had not singled out any specific country in its appeal. He feared that the English scholar's letter might 'do serious harm not only to the Committee as a whole, but more particularly to its relief action'.<sup>87</sup> But Halecki was also critical of Bergson's opposition to Reynold's memorandum. Writing to his Swiss colleague, he stressed that 'In my opinion, and I believe that it is shared by the Secretariat in general, it

79 Brigitte Schroeder-Gudehus, *Les scientifiques et la paix: la communauté scientifique internationale au cours des années 20*, Montreal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1978; Roswitha Reinbothe, *Deutsch als internationale Wissenschaftssprache und der Boykott nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2006.

80 Crawford, *Nationalism and internationalism*, p. 69. See also Brigitte Schroeder-Gudehus, 'Pas de Locarno pour la science', *Relations Internationales*, no. 46, 1986, pp. 173–94.

81 Jimena Canales, 'Einstein, Bergson and the experiment that failed: intellectual cooperation at the League of Nations', *MLN*, no. 120, 2005, pp. 1168–91; Siegfried Grundmann, *The Einstein dossiers: science and politics – Einstein's Berlin period*, Berlin: Springer, 2005.

82 LNA, 13C, doss. 33899, doc. 33877, *Relations of Committee on Intellectual Cooperation with Germany: correspondence respecting criticisms of Prof. Lowes-Dickinson and Prof. G. Murray*, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, 'The League of Nations and the German universities', letter 15 February 1924.

83 Gilbert Murray, 'League and Germany', *The Times*, 5 March 1924. Murray's action was described as 'even more serious and deplorable': LNA, *Correspondence respecting criticisms*, Oskar Halecki to Henri Bergson, 7 March 1924.

84 LNA, *Correspondence respecting criticisms*, Gonzague de Reynold, 'La Commission de Coopération Intellectuelle et les Allemands'.

85 *Ibid.*, Henri Bergson to Oskar Halecki, 13 March 1924 (see also Bergson to Halecki, 9 March 1924).

86 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, pp. 41–2. Cf. Riemens, *De passie voor vrede*, p. 235.

87 LNA, *Correspondence respecting criticisms*, Oskar Halecki to Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, 20 February 1924.

would be a pity if your response was not published'.<sup>88</sup> Eric Drummond also became involved in the internal discussions; he recalled that, at the CICI's foundation, opinions had been divided over whether its activities should extend to non-League members such as Germany.<sup>89</sup> While criticizing Lowes Dickinson and Murray, his letter nevertheless seemed to question Bergson's attitude. Consequently, Bergson expressed his surprise at the secretary-general's reaction.<sup>90</sup>

Despite professions regarding the transnational scope of science and the arts, intellectual cooperation was subject to power-political considerations and the limitations of the post-war order. Renoliet and Scholz have traced the changing nature of French policy in this respect, from an initial reluctance to support schemes for an 'intellectual' branch of the League of Nations to their subsequent embrace in the context of wider policy ends.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, the inherent malleability of cultural internationalism meant that it was also at the disposal of states that challenged the existing order. Funding from Fascist Italy, for instance, helped establish the International Institute of Educational Cinematography in Rome as part of the League of Nations system.<sup>92</sup> After Nazi Germany's withdrawal from the League of Nations, the Deutsche Kongresszentrale coordinated the country's involvement in scientific congresses.<sup>93</sup> German officials considered the participation in international congresses as a way of pre-empting criticism of the Third Reich at such events.<sup>94</sup> They claimed that, during the war, German scholars had been victims of a French strategy to use scientific internationalism for propaganda purposes; their presence at international congresses was hence interpreted as a weapon in prospective propaganda wars. At a different level, the *Europäische Revue* of Rohan's Fédération Internationale des Union Intellectuelles/Europäischer Kulturbund turned into a 'useful means of international propaganda and international contacts for the Third Reich'.<sup>95</sup> Similar to Italy and Germany, Japan also bundled its efforts for intellectual cooperation: in April 1934, not long after its withdrawal from the League of Nations, it established Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai (the Society for International Cultural Relations), which subsequently corresponded with the IICI.<sup>96</sup>

88 *Ibid.*, Oskar Halecki to Gonzague de Reynold, 5 March 1924.

89 *Ibid.*, Eric Drummond to Henri Bergson, 11 March 1924.

90 *Ibid.*, Henri Bergson to Oskar Halecki, 13 March 1924.

91 Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée*, pp. 15–26, 44–9; Scholz, 'Frankreichs Rolle'.

92 Christel Taillibert, *L'Institut international du cinématographe éducatif: regards sur le rôle du cinéma éducatif dans la politique internationale du fascisme italien*, Paris: Harmattan, 1999.

93 Madeleine Herren, "'Outwardly ... an innocuous conference authority": National Socialism and the logistics of international information management', *German History*, 20, 1, 2002, pp. 67–92.

94 Bundesarchiv Berlin, Reichskanzlei: Akten betreffend Internationale Kongresse. Auswärtige Angelegenheiten 11, R 43 1, 559, 'No. 202: Berlin, 22. Dezember 1934, Reichsminister für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda an sämtliche Reichsministerien. Betr: Einrichtung einer wissenschaftlichen Kongresszentrale'.

95 Müller, 'France and Germany', p. 104.

96 See e.g. IICI Archives, A.XI.13: *Relations diverses avec le Japon*, Asyske Kabayama to Bonnet, 27 July 1934. On the Kokusai Bunka Shinkōkai, see Sang-Mi Park, 'Japan's cultural diplomacy and the establishment of culture bureaus', WIAS Discussion Paper No. 2008-009, Waseda Institute for Advanced Study, Tokyo, 2009, <http://www.waseda.jp/wias/achievement/dp/pdf/dp2008009.pdf> (consulted 17 March 2011).

These examples illustrate that intellectual cooperation was not a neutral, disinterested phenomenon. While it was seen as key to making the new international order work, transnational intellectual relations had been one of the war's casualties. The potential responses to this conundrum were not very satisfying: one option was to work within the logic of the post-war order, meaning the exclusion of scholars and organizations from former enemy states and thus running counter to the principles that intellectual cooperation frequently evoked. The alternative was to be as inclusive as possible – but this implied the accommodation of views that questioned the existing order.

## Education as a tool for a peaceful order

In light of the challenges for intellectual cooperation, many scholars concluded that a peaceful world order depended on a fundamental change in attitudes. This accounts for the energy with which they pursued schemes for international education during the interwar years. Ideas about education as a tool for peace had circulated long before the Great War and existed in a variety of contexts, cultures, and civilizations.<sup>97</sup> Influenced by the rise of the modern peace movement, specific 'peace education' programmes for schools were discussed from the nineteenth century onwards.<sup>98</sup> Peace congresses and associations such as the School Peace League in Britain promoted educational reform as an element of peace-building. Exemplifying the lively debates on this issue, the Quaker Arthur Rowntree – Headmaster of Botham School in York – outlined his views on *Education in relation to internationalism* in 1911 and argued that schoolmasters could play a key role in fostering a spirit of cooperation, as they were 'leaders and guides, striving to rear up a more enlightened generation'.<sup>99</sup> After the First World War, educators continued to stress the linkages between peace and education.<sup>100</sup> In a lecture in 1919, Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthropology and creator of the 'Waldorf school' movement, picked up internationalist tropes when asserting that a global economy would have to be sustained by a 'global law' and a 'global spirit'.<sup>101</sup> An 'Internationale of the Spirit', Steiner argued, was required to create understanding and love for other nationalities.<sup>102</sup> He also maintained that internationalism had already been achieved in some fields, in particular the natural sciences.<sup>103</sup>

97 Werner Winterstein, 'Education', in Nigel J. Young, ed., *The Oxford International Encyclopedia of Peace*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, vol. 2, pp. 39–42.

98 By 'modern peace movement', I mean the movement whose transnational links were exemplified by the Universal Peace Congresses (from 1889) and the International Peace Bureau (from 1891).

99 Arthur Rowntree, *Education in relation to internationalism*, London: School Peace League, 1911.

100 Elly Herman, 'Aspects du mouvement international de l'éducation pour la paix dans l'entre-deux-guerres', in Jacques Bariéty and Antoine Fleury, eds., *Mouvements et initiatives de paix dans la politique internationale 1867–1928*, Bern: Peter Lang, 1987, pp. 171–200.

101 Rudolf Steiner, *Vom nationalen Egoismus zum Internationalismus: die Globalisierung des Geistes, des Rechtes und der Wirtschaft: ein Vortrag in Zürich am 30. Oktober 1919*, repr. Munich: Archiati, 2006, p. 6.

102 *Ibid.*, p. 30.

103 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

Another example of educators linking their own work to cultural internationalism was the international quarterly (*Education for*) *The New Era*. The publication was closely connected to the New Education Fellowship of the theosophical educator Beatrice Ensor and covered the pedagogic theories of Maria Montessori and Emile Jacques-Dalcroze.<sup>104</sup> In October 1921, the journal's German correspondent, Elizabeth Rotten, claimed that it was becoming increasingly 'apparent that the Reconstruction of the World cannot be brought about by believers in the old spirit'.<sup>105</sup> Rotten acknowledged views that 'the fighting instinct is a part of human nature' but expressed a belief in 'the victory of the spirit, in the possibility of spiritualizing these instincts through educating to self-education'. One of several events to drive such efforts was a conference held at Lankwitz near Berlin in October 1921, supported by the German Peace Society, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the German peace organization Bund Neues Vaterland, the educational section of the German League of Nations Society, the German National Society for International Education, and the Radical School Reformers Union. Rotten herself embodied the overlap between these different initiatives: having been a co-founder of the New Education Fellowship, she also helped to set up the International Bureau of Education in 1925, which was transformed into an intergovernmental organization in 1929.<sup>106</sup>

This wider movement explains why the League of Nations could hardly ignore educational questions. Appropriately, before becoming director of the IICI, Julien Luchaire had been Inspector-General of Public Education in France. The CICI discussed mechanisms for textbook reform, but also sought to promote exchanges of professors and students.<sup>107</sup> Furthermore, organizations such as the English Association of Headmistresses increasingly saw the League of Nations as a focal point for their efforts.<sup>108</sup> In turn, for many League of Nations supporters, education – including education about the League – became a central concern.<sup>109</sup> The IICI addressed these questions by founding a Comité d'Entente des Grandes Associations Internationales, aiming to further the cause of peace education.<sup>110</sup>

However, the League's work in the realm of education was subject to clear limitations: education systems fell into the domain of the nation-state and bodies such as the CICI and the IICI could only count on voluntary cooperation in cases such as textbook disputes. Léon Bourgeois, for instance, was conscious of 'the risk of the reproach of interference': 'Systems

104 See Kevin Brehony, 'A New Education for a New Era: creating international fellowship through conferences, 1921–1938', *Paedagogica Historica*, 40, 5/6, 2004, pp. 733–55.

105 'From our German correspondent', *New Era*, no. 8, 1921, p. 247.

106 Leo Fernig, 'The International Bureau of Education: a centre of the Progressive Education/New Education movement', [http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/FERNIG\\_2.PDF](http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/FERNIG_2.PDF) (consulted 2 March 2009).

107 Eckhardt Fuchs, 'Der Völkerbund und die Institutionalisierung transnationaler Bildungsbeziehungen', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 54 (2006), pp. 888–99; idem, 'The creation of new international networks in education: the League of Nations and educational organizations in the 1920s', *Paedagogica Historica*, 43, 2, 2007, pp. 199–209.

108 Joyce Goodman, 'Working for change across international borders: the Association of Headmistresses and Education for International Citizenship', *Paedagogica Historica*, 43, 1, 2007, pp. 165–80.

109 For American internationalists, education had a dual purpose: providing a basis for peace and creating a more receptive climate for the promotion of League membership. See Warren F. Kuehl and Lynne K. Dunn, *Keeping the covenant: American internationalists and the League of Nations, 1920–1939*, Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1997, pp. 64–75.

110 Fuchs, 'Der Völkerbund', p. 896.



of education, scientific or philosophical research may lead to great international results, but they would never be initiated or would never prosper if they were not bound up with the deepest national sensibilities'.<sup>111</sup> The League bodies for intellectual cooperation had to strike a balance between two rather different impulses: seemingly pragmatic work for the exchange of knowledge, as often desired by governments; and engagement with more ambitious schemes, as promoted by some intellectuals and associations. In its relations with China, the former aspect seemed dominant. China sought League assistance in addressing problems in its education system; it also hoped for League help in finding European professors for chairs in English literature, geography, and geology at Nanjing University.<sup>112</sup> In 1931, a Chinese request led to the formation of an Educational Mission under the auspices of the CICL.<sup>113</sup> It brought together experts from primary to higher education; during their stay, the members of the Mission were to examine different features of China's educational life without participating in domestic debates. The work of the Educational Mission revealed some of the preconceptions that delimited intellectual cooperation: its head, Carl Heinrich Becker, for instance, was highly critical of American educational methods, emphasizing cultural and civilizational differences between the USA and China.<sup>114</sup>

While educational missions and exchanges focused on cooperation and the transmission of ideas, there were also efforts to establish more permanent fora for educational exchange. In 1920, the Union of International Associations launched the project of an 'Université internationale' at the Palais Mondial in Brussels: through an interdisciplinary study programme, this international summer school for students was meant to lay the basis for a peaceful future.<sup>115</sup> Although the League initially supported this venture, Stephen Duggan, president of the Institute of International Education and professor at the College of the City of New York, remained sceptical:

There have come to my desk during the past year four different propositions for such an International University. It would have been much better for the League of Nations to have held a conference on the subject before adopting any single plan. Personally I think La Fontaine's idea is one that is far in the future.<sup>116</sup>

In one respect, Duggan's comments were certainly correct: the Brussels scheme was merely one of many proposals for an international university. Based on earlier educational efforts in Santiniketan, Tagore established Visva-Bharati in 1921. This institution was explicitly conceived as a place for intellectual encounters between the East and West. From a different angle, and with a focus on the arts, the Italian municipality of Capri offered to turn its Charterhouse into an international intellectual centre:

111 Bourgeois, *Organisation*, p. 3.

112 Kreissler, 'L'Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle', p. 90; Kuß, *Der Völkerbund*, pp. 172–73.

113 Kuß, *Der Völkerbund*, pp. 175–82.

114 *Ibid.*, pp. 191–2.

115 UAI, *L'université internationale: notice et programme*, Brussels: UAI, 1920.

116 LNA, C13, series 10501–17850 (R1009), Stephen Duggan (Institute of International Education) to Inazō Nitobe, 18 April 1921. I am indebted to Katharina Rietzler for drawing my attention to this document.

A centre for intellectual production and protection where, thanks to the most favourable ambiance ... learned people, artists, international scholars will find a unique stay, a happy existence, a worthy framework to develop their thinking, to create their works. Capri would in this way become a [new] kind of Villa Médici ... placed under the patronage of the League of Nations.<sup>117</sup>

Another approach was represented by the Austrian scientist Robert Bárány, recipient of the 1914 Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine. In 1925, while working as Professor of Pharmacology at the University of Uppsala, he proposed an international university for politics. This, he suggested, would help to foster a spirit of understanding between statesmen, diplomats, politicians, journalists, and professors.<sup>118</sup> Five years later, the Belgian socialist and sociologist Hendrik De Man sought to launch a similar institution but for a different constituency: his plan for an International Labour University initially targeted labour representatives and was to begin with a summer school.<sup>119</sup> While his plan did not obtain financial backing, it was supported by Hermann Seelbach, a leading figure in the adult-education activities of German trade unions, and was met with interest from International Labour Organization (ILO) staff. These different examples illustrate how international education was viewed as a potential solution to a range of social, political, and intellectual problems.

As early as 1923, the Spanish government raised ‘international university’ matters at the General Assembly of the League of Nations. Its intervention had two dimensions: on the one hand, it sought to advance the equivalence of diplomas in secondary and higher education; on the other, it addressed the creation of an international university.<sup>120</sup> The CICI was charged with examining these ideas. The resulting report described the issue of an international university as ‘one of the most litigious and most contested questions in the field of intellectual cooperation’.<sup>121</sup> In this context, it referred to the earlier efforts of the Union of International Associations.<sup>122</sup> The CICI’s enquiry met with a sceptical response. The University of Queensland in Australia noted the idea of ‘the establishment at one of the four great Universities of Christendom – Paris, Salamanca, Oxford, or Bologna of a self-governing International University possessing full academic rights and privileges with power to confer degrees and give diplomas which will be recognised in all the States Members of the League of Nations’. However, it estimated that improved inter-university relations

117 See letter of 13 February 1923 forwarded to Luchoire and the brochure ‘Capri alla Commissione di Cooperazione Intellettuale della Lega delle Nazioni’, in LNA, C13, doss. 256567, doc. 25657, *Proposed formation of an Intellectual Centre at Capri*.

118 LNA, 13C, doss. 28370, doc. 45163, Documents in *Plan of M. Bárány, Upsala, [sic] for an international university*, 13C, doc. 45163, doss. 28370. On Bárány’s scheme, see also Riemens, *De passie voor vrede*, p. 301.

119 See International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, Hendrik De Man papers, part V, dossier 211.

120 Oskar Halecki, ‘Le problème de l’Université internationale : rapport préliminaire soumis à la Commission de Coopération Intellectuelle (Sous-Commission universitaire)’, p. 1, in LNA, 13C, doss. 28370, doc. 34984, *Création d’une Université Internationale: rapport préliminaire soumis à la Sous-Commission universitaire de la Commission de Coopération Intellectuelle*.

121 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

122 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

might render such an international university obsolete.<sup>123</sup> Similar comments were received from the government of Latvia, which ‘agreed with the opinion of the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation that, in the present conditions, the realization of such a project would meet with insurmountable obstacles’.<sup>124</sup> At the same time, Latvia reasserted its approval of plans to strengthen the exchanges of students and professors.

These responses suggest that the scope for the CICI and the IICI remained limited. Nonetheless, the idea of an international university continued to exercise considerable appeal. In 1931, H. R. G. Greaves – later Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics and Political Science – saw such a university as ‘the best instrument’ for the development of an ‘international outlook’.<sup>125</sup>

It would become a centre of thought that should proclaim the thinker’s sacred right to utter his thought regardless of the will of governments. And it would clearly by the mere scattering of its scholars be the most forceful method of promoting denationalism in education that it is possible to conceive. Above all, an international university would form the nucleus of what has been called the international mind. By that is meant a denational approach to the problems of the day and an organized thinking upon world society with its institutional expression, the League. Eternal fame awaits the man or country that builds such a university. The foundations lie already in Geneva.<sup>126</sup>

During and after the Second World War, Greaves promoted the idea of a United Nations University Institute in London.<sup>127</sup> While such an institution did not come about in Britain, the UN ultimately created such a body in Tokyo in 1973; and in 1980 the United Nations General Assembly approved the establishment of the University for Peace (UPEACE) in Costa Rica. Such example suggests that we should not simply write off ideas on international education as impractical; at the same time, the transformative power of such efforts remains open to debate.

## Order and intellectual labour: workers of the mind, unite?

Although education and other tools of intellectual cooperation had limited scope to transform the interwar order, cultural internationalism could also address the problem of order at another level: the IICI and the CICI formed part of the drive to define the role of

123 ‘University questions: observations of University of Queensland in reply to enquiry of November, 1924 (Original in 13c/46556/41361)’, in LNA, 13C, doss, 28370, doc. 46566, *Establishment of an international university: correspondence with the government of Australia*.

124 LNA, 13C, doss, 28370, doc. 44965, *Proposed international university: correspondence with the government of Latvia*, letter from the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 30 June 1925.

125 Greaves, *League committees*, p. 137.

126 *Ibid.*, p. 138.

127 See Senate House Library, London, MS 822, six letters by Professor H. R. G. Greaves, written between 1942 and 1953.

intellectuals within society, including their position within the international order at large. Christophe Charle has emphasized that the quest for recognition was a central issue in the history of intellectuals,<sup>128</sup> the social dimension of this concern being captured in terms such as ‘intellectual workers’ or ‘intellectual labour’. These labels connoted a loosely defined constituency: in nineteenth-century Germany, they covered workers whose role in the production process was not linked to manual labour; in Italy they included civil servants and white-collar workers.<sup>129</sup> The ILO acknowledged that it was ‘difficult in some instances to define intellectual workers exactly and to ascertain where they differ from employees or even manual workers’.<sup>130</sup> ILO publications subsumed, for instance, university graduates, journalists, and people working in the ‘public services’ under this heading. One way of addressing these uncertainties was for the joining together of intellectual workers. As noted by the ILO director, Albert Thomas, the ‘movement towards the organization of intellectuals’ was ‘certainly one of the social phenomena most characteristic of our time’. He likened this movement to nineteenth-century labour activism and asserted that the ‘perilous’ situation of intellectual workers lay at the heart of the ‘legitimate defence of their interests’.<sup>131</sup>

Efforts for the international representation of intellectual workers preceded the foundation of the IICI and the CICI. For instance, when the Nobel Prize-winning chemist Wilhelm Ostwald founded his association *Die Brücke* in 1911, he portrayed it as an ‘international institute for the organization of intellectual labour’ (*Internationales Institut zur Organisation geistiger Arbeit*) and as a tool for the division of labour between intellectual workers from different countries.<sup>132</sup> La Fontaine and Otlet pursued similar aims through their *International Institute of Bibliography*, which, from its inception in 1894, offered a bibliographic information service. The Belgians’ *Union of International Associations*, launched in 1910, was connected to these efforts and has been interpreted as a protagonist of ‘intellectual trade unionism’.<sup>133</sup>

128 Christophe Charle, *Les intellectuels en Europe au XIXe siècle : essai d'histoire comparée*, Paris: Seuil, 1996.

129 Werner Conze, ‘Arbeiter’, in Otto Burnner, Werner Conze, and Reinhard Kosselleck, eds., *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, Göttingen: Klett-Cotta, 1972, vol. 1, pp. 224–5; Victoria De Grazia, *The culture of consent: mass organization of leisure in fascist Italy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 146–7.

130 League of Nations, *International Labour Conference: tenth session*, vol. 2: *Report of the Director presented to the Conference*, Geneva: International Labour Office, 1927, para. 210, pp. 235–6.

131 Albert Thomas, ‘Adresse du Bureau International du Travail’ of 15 November 1922, *Der Geistesarbeiter: Zeitschrift für die Organisierung der geistigen Arbeit und der geistigen Arbeiter / Le Travailleur Intellectuel: Revue de l'Organisation du Travail Intellectuel et des Travailleurs Intellectuels*, 1, 2, 1922, p. 4.

132 Ostwald described the analysis of intellectual workers’ needs as the launch pad for his organization: Wilhelm Ostwald, *Lebenslinien: eine Selbstbiographie*, Berlin: Klasing, 1927, vol. 3, pp. 287–310. See also Thomas Hapke, ‘Wilhelm Ostwald und seine Initiativen zur Organisation und Standardisierung naturwissenschaftlicher Publizistik: Enzyklopädismus, Internationalismus und Taylorismus am Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts’, in Christoph Meinel, ed., *Fachschrifttum, Bibliothek und Naturwissenschaft im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997, pp. 157–74.

133 Christophe Verbruggen, ‘“Intellectual workers” and their search for a place within the ILO in the interwar years’, in Jasmien Van Daele, Magaly Rodríguez García, Geert Van Goethem, and Marcel Van der Linden, eds., *ILO histories: essays on the International Labour Organization and its impact on the world during the twentieth century*, Bern: Peter Lang, 2010, pp. 272–92.

Significantly, when proposing the creation of a League organization for intellectual cooperation, Otlet likened its mission to that of the ILO.<sup>134</sup>

The efforts to address intellectuals' social position gathered momentum after 1918: the social, economic, and material devastation caused by the war had left many intellectual workers in a vulnerable position. At an international level, the foundation of the International PEN in 1921 was the most well-known example of efforts to represent the interests of intellectual workers. Meanwhile, the work of French associations culminated in the foundation of the Confédération Internationale de Travailleurs Intellectuels (CITI) in 1923. This organization also provided a definition of 'intellectual workers' that the ILO subsequently adopted.<sup>135</sup> In addition to PEN and CITI, there were international organizations with a more limited lifespan: one example was the Fédération Internationale des Arts, des Lettres et des Sciences, founded by Banville d'Hostel in 1918. It linked the defence of the material interests of intellectual workers to 'the rapprochement of fraternal spirits of all countries with the aim of peace and reciprocal help'.<sup>136</sup> Having planned to organize a 'first estates-general of the intellectual world', the venture failed to obtain support from the IICI.

Neither the CICI nor the IICI were campaigning bodies; their role within the League of Nations system was not fully compatible with an 'intellectual trade unionism'. Léon Bourgeois's initial report to the League of Nations Council – despite being entitled *Organisation of Intellectual Labour* – declined to discuss 'the defence of the interests, and the improvement of the position, of intellectual workers': the French internationalist believed 'that this special question falls more directly . . . within the competence of the International Labour Office'.<sup>137</sup> Alfred Zimmern described the League's work for intellectual cooperation as the pursuit of two aims:

Firstly, our object is to promote the meeting of minds, or if you like to promote practical intellectual co-operation between living persons. Secondly, our object is to improve the tools of the intellectual worker, to improve his instruments or work, and to facilitate intellectual work in all its wide range.<sup>138</sup>

In practice, this approach meant that the League of Nations could indeed take measures for the benefit of intellectual workers. The expansion of international copyright law was one example, with the League building upon earlier agreements such as the international conventions on patent rights (1883) and the protection of literary works (1886).<sup>139</sup> The IICI and the CICI dealt with the revision of the Berne Convention of 1886, and sought to

134 Union des Associations Internationales, *Organisation Internationale du Travail Intellectuel*, Brussels: UAI, 1921, pp. 3–4.

135 *Congrès de Paris, Septembre 1927*, Paris: CITI, 1927, pp. 84–5, as cited in Verbruggen, "Intellectual workers", pp. 272–3.

136 IICI Archives, B.IV.12: *Fédération Internationale des Arts, des Lettres et des Sciences*, 'Rapport sur la Fédération Internationale des Arts, des Lettres et des Sciences, late May 1926'.

137 Bourgeois, *Organisation*, p. 3.

138 Zimmern, 'The League', p. 145.

139 For a contemporary's perspective, see Paul Reinsch, *Public international unions: their work and organization: a study in international administrative law*, Boston, MA: World Peace Foundation, 1911, pp. 36–8.

coordinate these measures with the intellectual property regime adopted by the Pan-American Union.<sup>140</sup> This, it has been argued, laid the foundations for the Universal Copyright Convention that was adopted in 1952 under the auspices of UNESCO.<sup>141</sup> The CICI also gathered material on the conditions of intellectual work in various contexts. Venturing into the field of cultural statistics, it published information on the exchange of documents as well as country-specific surveys ranging from Brazil to Greece.<sup>142</sup> The CICI's enquiries regarding the status of intellectual workers were also significant, as they helped to build up the committee's transnational network and in some instances resulted in the creation of National Committees of Intellectual Cooperation.

Zimmern's summary of the League's aims acknowledged that intellectual cooperation went beyond the material concerns of intellectual workers: the IICI was supposed to provide intellectuals with 'new or better means of work'.<sup>143</sup> This task was entwined with order in a conceptual sense: the remit to help intellectual workers cope with an apparent abundance of information. As in other respects, such efforts were marked by underlying continuities. La Fontaine and Otlet's transnational work for bibliography was an evident precursor, with bibliographical classification serving as a tool for intellectual enquiry and collaboration. Their promotion of the Universal Decimal Classification as a bibliographical standard was meant to assist with the task of ordering knowledge, forming the basis of a universal card index, the so-called 'Répertoire Bibliographique Universel'. Bibliography as a tool for intellectual cooperation was a durable concern: the League bodies studied bibliographic questions, published bibliographical guides, and supported plans for a network of documentation offices.<sup>144</sup>

The quest to create order through the collection and classification of information reveals the encyclopaedic streak that underpinned intellectual cooperation. Such ambitions were embodied by the International Institute of Bibliography, but also informed Ostwald's *Die Brücke* and interwar projects such as Otto Neurath's *Encyclopedia of united sciences* or H.G. Wells' notion of a 'world brain'.<sup>145</sup> An organization such as the Schweizerischer Bund Geistig Schaffender / Fédération Suisse des Travailleurs Intellectuels – primarily concerned with more pragmatic issues – nonetheless expressed an interest in the idea of a 'World Depot of Books'.<sup>146</sup> Even when such schemes did not bear fruit, they shed light on the wider context in which the IICI and the CICI operated. League bodies corresponded widely with a

140 Isabella Löhr, 'Der Völkerbund und die Entwicklung des Schutzes geistigen Eigentums in der Zwischenkriegszeit', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 54, 10, 2006, p. 906.

141 *Ibid.*, p. 910.

142 See e.g. CICI, *Enquiry into the conditions of intellectual work*, Geneva: League of Nations, 1923.

143 IICI, *A.I.10: Projet de l'organisation de l'I.I.C.I. par M. J. Destrée*, doc. C.288.1925XII, Report of the CICI, 27 May 1925.

144 For instance, following suggestions by Jean Gérard (of the Union Française des Organismes de Documentation), the IICI published a guide to documentation centres. On French ventures in this field, see Sylvie Fayet-Scribe, *Histoire de la documentation en France: culture, science et technologie de l'information, 1895–1937*, Paris: CNRS Editions, 2000.

145 Many of these cases (and their similarities) are discussed in Boyd Rayward, ed., *European modernism and the information society: informing the present, understanding the past*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008.

146 LNA, doss. 25658 (R1051), *Correspondence with Der Geistesarbeiter concerning formation of an international library*, letter of 12 January 1923.

great variety of associations, for instance through the IICI's Section for Scientific Relations, engaging with ventures that expressed intellectuals' concern for order. As a former vice-president of the French Société des Gens de Lettres pointed out in 1924, order was 'the most precious, the most essential condition' for intellectual activity.<sup>147</sup> After all, the latter meant 'knowing to classify one's ideas, to classify them logically and methodologically'.<sup>148</sup>

One scheme that typified the concern for 'intellectual order' was a proposal by Joseph Pijoan, a Catalan art historian who taught at the University of Chicago. In October 1930, he suggested that the League of Nations create an *Annuaire des progrès de la science* for both specialists and laypeople, summarizing scientific progress in different disciplines and published in five languages.<sup>149</sup> That year, Pijoan operated from the League headquarters thanks to a *lettre de mission* and, one year later, managed to arrange a meeting with Albert Einstein. In a letter to the director of the IICI, Pijoan expressed his overarching aims:

I want to disclose to you dear Bonnet, that what interests me most of the whole project is not so much the result, yearly book, or bibliography, as the fact that with a scheme of this kind we shall organise all the scholars of the world in a sort of Salvation Army for the good for everybody. It may be a sort of rearguard of the League of Nations; every science will have to have a sort of representative in every country. All those scholars will realise they belong to a body for the progress and advancement patronised by the League of Nations. They will become a phenomenal force of opinion in a moment of crisis.<sup>150</sup>

Neither the IICI nor the Comité des Conseillers Scientifiques displayed much enthusiasm for this project.<sup>151</sup> The IICI nonetheless tested its viability, consulting with the historian Henri Berr's Institut International de Synthèse to this end.<sup>152</sup> Through his *Revue de synthèse historique*, his institute, and his 'Semaines internationales de synthèse', Berr sought to transcend disciplinary boundaries and promote a more unified science. In this respect, the Institut International de Synthèse illustrated the encyclopaedic ambitions in schemes for intellectual cooperation.<sup>153</sup> As it exemplified concerns that cut across institutional boundaries, the IICI was prepared to offer its own premises for Berr's organization.<sup>154</sup>

147 Albert Cim, *Le travail intellectuel*, Paris: Alcan, 1924, p. 8.

148 *Ibid.*, p. 9. On the importance of order in the development of the social sciences, see Peter Wagner, *A history and theory of the social sciences: not all that is solid melts into the air*, London: Sage, 2001.

149 IICI Archives, D.VII.9: *Projet d'un annuaire des progrès de la connaissance (Projet du Professeur Pijoan)*, 'Note concernant la publication, sous les auspices de la Société des Nations, d'un annuaire des progrès de la connaissance par Joseph Pijoan'.

150 *Ibid.*, Joseph Pijoan to Henri Bonnet, 21 October 1931.

151 *Ibid.*, Daniel Secrétan to Jean Daniel de Montenach, 20 November 1931.

152 Doninique Bourel, 'Présentation, Henri Berr (1863–1954)', in Agnès Biard, Dominique Bourel, and Eric Brian, eds., *Henri Berr et la culture du XXe siècle: histoire, science et philosophie*, Paris: Albin Michel, 1997, p. 14.

153 Giuliana Gemelli, 'L'encyclopédisme au XXe siècle: Henri Berr et la conjoncture des années vingt', in *ibid.*, pp. 269–93.

154 Discussions on this issue started in October 1925. By 1926, tensions between the two organizations had emerged because the IICI was not prepared to give Berr the space for a fully fledged documentation service: see IICI Archives, B.IV.14: *Centre International de Synthèse*.

The ambiguous responses to such efforts indicate that the schemes for intellectual order and synthesis were interpreted as part of the IICI and CICI's remit to improve the conditions for intellectual work – even in instances where their realization seemed unlikely. This points at a tension that was inherent in the effort to address the concerns of intellectuals: the aim to remain open to a variety of projects and to define one's constituency as broadly as possible ran counter to a key precondition of order, namely the acceptance of hierarchies of knowledge.

## Conclusion

The League of Nations was an outcome of, and an instrument for, the post-war order. Through its mechanisms for intellectual cooperation, it involved groups and bodies that have been interpreted as the nucleus of a 'global civil society', 'global community', or 'world culture'.<sup>155</sup> By considering the IICI and the CICI in their wider context, we can see how seemingly 'utopian' ideas were connected to more 'respectable' ventures, and how arbitrary such categories could be. Even when ostensibly targeting scholarly matters, intellectuals often promoted schemes that implied visions of an international community. In this respect, plans that aimed at intellectual order were intrinsically connected to the social and political order. As a result, efforts for intellectual cooperation were hampered by the power-politics of governments, an attachment to concepts such as civilization, a certain regionalism, and, ultimately, too many hopes invested in the League of Nations' institutional frameworks.

The efforts for intellectual cooperation also performed another role: they helped groups or individuals to define their status as 'intellectuals' or 'intellectual workers'. This was more than an abstract pursuit, given the precarious material position in which many people found themselves after the war. In itself, interaction with the IICI and CICI was a manifestation of being an intellectual. After all, to be such a person means 'actively intervening in public discourse, involvement in the media, and engagement with the workings of power'.<sup>156</sup> Yet the League of Nations could not solve the intellectuals' problem, namely that to effect meaningful political change you had to be able to 'speak to power'. Moreover, many efforts suffered from an underlying tension: the impulse to be inclusive – with regard to individuals, groups, or different types of knowledge – stood at odds with the way in which exclusion and selection are intrinsic to many intellectual activities.

Why should one examine the interwar schemes for intellectual cooperation, given their somewhat limited degrees of success? This article has argued that such efforts shed light on much wider issues in the history of the interwar years: they show us how many concepts – from the organization of international relations to the role of intellectuals

155 Anna Katharina Wöbse, "'To cultivate the international mind": der Völkerbund und die Förderung der globalen Zivilgesellschaft', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 54, 10, 2006, pp. 852–63; Akira Iriye, *Global community: the role of international organizations in the making of the contemporary world*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2006; John Boli and George Thomas, eds., *Constructing world culture: international nongovernmental organizations since 1875*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999.

156 Aggie Hirst, 'Intellectuals and US foreign policy', in Inderjeet Parmar, Linda B. Miller, and Mark Ledwidge, eds., *New directions in US foreign policy*, New York: Routledge, 2009, p. 107.



within society – remained in flux after the First World War. Intellectual work could be a form of contestation, but also of fixing and fixating the order.

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