pline is not merely the fault of the discipline; it has been a two-way street. Insofar as there is a prejudice against military history among many historians, it ought to stop; prejudging anything is never a good idea. But military historians need to become less resistant to contemporary trends in research—from social history to postmodernism to the new cultural history. Historians of World War II, for example, need to admit that Alice Kaplan's *The Interpreter*, an intriguing and complex account of military justice in the U.S. Army, is just as much a "military history" as the most recent book on the Battle of Normandy, or that Emily Rosenberg's work on the icon of Pearl Harbor is as important as the latest book on the Japanese attack itself. Indeed, military history that does not take into account all three schools (society, culture, and the distinct imperatives of the battlefield) is by definition incomplete. The debate over the "military revolution" might well serve as a model here. It has engaged a wide range of methodologies and schools; it involves political and social historians, historians of technology, as well as those who emphasize the primacy of operational history; and it goes well beyond parochial boundaries to touch upon fundamental issues of state formation, absolute monarchy in early modern Europe, and the subsequent Western domination of the globe.

Despite these problems, which no doubt promise to be contentious, military historians today are doing enough good work, based on exciting and innovative approaches, to re-engage the attention of historians in any number of areas. My final advice to my professional colleagues and friends in the broader discipline? Try something genuinely daring, even countercultural, in terms of today's academy. Read some military history.

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Review Essay

Back to the League of Nations

SUSAN PEDERSEN

For the two decades of its effective existence, the League of Nations was a favored subject of academic research. International lawyers, historians, and political scientists across the globe scrutinized and debated every aspect of its working; leading American scholars of the period—among them James Shotwell, Quincy Wright, and Raymond Leslie Buell—devoted much of their lives to investigating (and often to supporting) its ideals.[1] The League's demise slowed that scholarly flow to a trickle.[2] Although a number of its former officials wrote temperate assessments of its activities in preparation for the transition to the United Nations,[3] most postwar accounts of the League were "decline and fall" narratives or analytical postmortems intended to reinforce "realist" analyses of international relations.[4] Early studies of the League had been based largely on the institution's printed records; those chastened later accounts, by contrast, were written from diplomatic records and out of national archives. For thirty years, the archives of the League's own Geneva Secretariat were very little disturbed.

That neglect began to lift in the late 1980s, and for obvious reasons. With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the bipolar security system, interwar debates over how to reconcile stability with new claims to sovereignty began to sound familiar. The breakup of Yugoslavia also unleashed a wave of ethnic conflict and

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[1] The bibliography of works on the League of Nations maintained by the League of Nations Archives and Indiana University's Center for the Study of Global Change lists more than three thousand works, a majority of which were published before 1950. See http://www.indiana.edu/~league/bibliography.php.

[2] Note, however, the useful studies written by James C. Barros: *The Aland Islands Question: Its Settlement by the League of Nations* (New Haven, Conn., 1968); *The Corfu Incident of 1923: Mussolini and the League of Nations* (Princeton, N.J., 1965); *The League of Nations and the Great Powers: The Greek-Bulgaria Incident, 1925* (Oxford, 1970); *Office without Power: Secretary-General Sir Eric Drummond, 1919–1933* (Oxford, 1979); *Betrayal from Within: Joseph Avenol, Secretary-General of the League of Nations, 1933–1940* (New Haven, Conn., 1969).

[3] Significant writings by ex–League officials are cited below; the comprehensive account is Francis P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations* (1952; repr., London, 1960).

[4] Two readable "decline and fall" accounts are Elmer Bendiner, *A Time for Angels: The Tragicomic History of the League of Nations* (New York, 1975), and George Scott, *The Rise and Fall of the League of Nations* (1973; U.S. ed., New York, 1974). Perhaps the best scholarly survey, one written from a "realist" perspective, is F. S. Northedge, *The League of Nations: Its Life and Times, 1920–1946* (Leicester, 1986). John Mearsheimer has often reiterated that realist view; see, for example, "The False Promise of International Institutions," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (Winter 1994/1995): 5–49.

claims-making reminiscent of the Habsburg Empire's collapse, prompting scholars to ask whether the "minorities protection system" established under the League had managed to reconcile ideals of self-determination and human rights any more successfully.[5] The League's administration of Danzig and the Saar, as well as the mandates system founded to oversee the administration of ex-German and Ottoman areas, likewise came back into focus, as the United Nations faced the problem of "failed states" in a world now constructed around the presumption that almost all territorial units would be "statelike" in form.[6] By the mid-1990s, new historical research was under way or in print on all these aspects of the League, and graduate students tilling the new field of "transnational history" discovered its footprints as well. International systems for combating or managing epidemic disease, drug trafficking, sex trafficking, refugees, and a host of other problems were found to have originated in or been furthered by conventions hammered out under the auspices of the League of Nations.

The works resulting from this research have enabled us to come to a better understanding of this much-misunderstood international organization. In contrast to a postwar historiography inclined to view the League from the standpoint of 1933 or 1939, the relevant question now is not "why the League failed" but rather the more properly historical question of what it did and meant over its twenty-five-year existence. We are now able to sketch out three different but not mutually exclusive narratives of the League, one still focused largely (if less pessimistically) on its contribution to peacekeeping, but the other two concerned more with its work delimiting, and to a degree managing, the shifting boundaries between state power and international authority in this period. If one considers its work in stabilizing new states and running the minorities protection and mandates systems, the League appears as a key agent in the transition from a world of formal empires to a world of formally sovereign states. By contrast, if one notes its efforts to regulate cross-border traffics or problems of all kinds, it emerges rather as a harbinger of global governance.

Archival research has deepened our understanding of the League's activities in each of these three areas. By examining that scholarship together, however, and especially by paying as much attention to the less-studied areas of state-building and international cooperation as to the more conventional subject of security, it is possible to show how profoundly some innovative institutional characteristics of the League, most notably its reliance on international officials and its symbiotic relationship with interest groups and publicity, marked every aspect of its work. Yet—and this is the crucial point—those characteristics affected different policy arenas very differently. Put simply, while extensive consultation and wide publicity may have helped the League to hammer out agreements on controlling epidemics, those same

[5] Perhaps unsurprisingly, it was a historian of Greece and the Balkans, Mark Mazower, who was particularly insistent about the need to pay attention to the minorities system of the League. See Mazower, "Minorities and the League of Nations in Interwar Europe," *Daedalus* 126 (1997): 47–61, and *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London, 1998), chap. 2.

[6] For such present-minded recovery of League precedents, see, e.g., Gerald B. Helman, "Saving Failed States," *Foreign Policy* 89 (Winter 1992–1993): 3–20; Ralph Wilde, "From Danzig to East Timor and Beyond: The Role of International Territorial Administration," *American Journal of International Law* 95, no. 3 (2001): 583–606.

factors could seriously hamper disarmament negotiations. Structure and process mattered, a finding that suggests the need for more attention to the League's internal arrangements and its complex relationship with various "mobilized publics." Happily, this topic is also now attracting scholarly interest.

Security is the area in which a revisionist argument about the League seems hardest to sustain. The League was, after all, established to maintain world peace, and spectacularly failed to do so. Although the League Council mediated some minor territorial disputes in the early 1920s and succeeded in bringing Germany into the organization in 1926, when it was confronted with great-power expansionism in Manchuria and Ethiopia, its time-consuming and wordy deliberations drove the aggressor states out of the League, but not out of the invaded territory. True, in retrospect and at the time, some commentators attributed that outcome less to the limitations of "collective security" than to the reluctance of the great powers to give it their full support, but when Frank Walters advanced such an argument in his landmark *History of the League of Nations*, Gerhart Niemeyer rebuked him. Great powers, like other states, understandably pursue their own interests; if they found that they could not do so through the mechanisms offered by the League, those mechanisms—and not the great powers—were at fault.[7] International relations is the art of making great-power interests and global stability coincide: if the League made that coincidence more difficult, it deserved the opprobrium heaped upon it.

And yet, for a time, great-power interests and League processes did appear to coincide—or at least some astute politicians of the 1920s tried hard to make them do so. Aristide Briand, Gustav Stresemann, and Austen Chamberlain may not have pored over the Covenant, and Chamberlain, at least, regarded the effort to come up with ever more binding collective language as contrary to Britain's interests and a waste of time, but all three nevertheless found the League "a much more useful body" than they had anticipated, and made it central to their efforts at rapprochement.[8] The agreements and the euphoric "spirit of Locarno" that resulted did not last, and in retrospect have been dismissed as having been an "illusion" all along,[9] but recent studies of all three main players, a new account of diplomatic and economic stabilization efforts in the 1920s, and Zara Steiner's magisterial international history *The Lights That Failed* temper that judgment. The statesmen of the 1920s are undergoing rehabilitation, in the process modestly lifting the reputation of the League as well.

Famous in their own time but eclipsed by the cataclysms that followed, Briand and Stresemann merit the attention they are now receiving. The story of how these two men moved away from their earlier intransigent nationalism toward conciliation and even a measure of fellow feeling is a gripping one, and in *Aristide Brand* and *Gustav Stresemann*, Gérard Unger and Jonathan Wright do their respective subjects

[7] Gerhart Niemeyer, "The Balance Sheet of the League Experiment," *International Organization* 6, no. 4 (1952): 537–558.

[8] Austen Chamberlain to F. S. Oliver, January 17, 1927, in Charles Petrie, *The Life and Letters of the Right Hon. Sir Austen Chamberlain*, 2 vols. (London, 1940), 2:312.

[9] For which see Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace: International Relations in Europe, 1918–1933* (1976; 2nd ed., Basingstoke, 2003).

justice.[10] These are, appropriately, full lives, treating prewar activities and the intricacies of party politics, but the steps toward rapprochement—Stresemann's ending German resistance to the Ruhr occupation, the moves that led to Locarno, the famous tête-à-tête at Thoiry, and Briand's premature but prescient advocacy of European federation—are well told. They can be complemented, moreover, by *Austen Chamberlain and the Commitment to Europe*, Richard Grayson's meticulous study of Chamberlain's critical role as British foreign secretary between 1924 and 1929; and *The Unfinished Peace after World War I*, Patrick Cohrs's comprehensive account of diplomatic negotiations and agreements over reparations and security in the 1920s.[11] These studies vary in scope and emphasis (Cohrs's and Wright's are the most historiographically aware and the most consciously revisionist), but all treat the "Locarno spirit" not as a chimera, but as the crux of a pragmatic and evolving settlement.

In doing so, moreover, they provide some grounds for a reassessment of the League even in the realm of security. To a degree at the time, and even more in retrospect, "Locarno" was seen as weakening the security system of the League. It was, after all, a "great power" and not a "collective" agreement; moreover, because it covered only Germany's western borders, it raised awkward questions about the status of a League Covenant that presumably already guaranteed not only those borders but the Polish and Czech frontiers as well. Lord Robert Cecil certainly thought the Locarno agreements a poor substitute for his own proposals aimed at strengthening the Covenant, and in his autobiography was markedly grudging about Chamberlain's achievement.[12] Yet Cecil, as Peter Yearwood notes, was an ambitious politician with a strong proprietary interest in the League and what proved to be an overly optimistic view of member states' commitment to the Covenant;[13] by contrast, Chamberlain, while considering the kind of guarantee offered by the Covenant to be "so wide and general that it carries no conviction whatever" unless supplemented by more pragmatic regional pacts, nevertheless found the League to be an invaluable staging ground for the face-to-face contact between foreign ministers on neutral territory that a policy of reconciliation required.[14] And Locarno, Cohrs insists, was only one part of a British-led and American-supported effort to moderate Franco-German antagonism and craft a stable framework for European peace and recovery after the Ruhr crisis of 1923 (the other being the American-led renegotiations over reparations that culminated in the London Agreements of 1924). If Locarno exposed the limits of the Covenant, then, it did not necessarily undermine the League, which began to look in this period less like an embryonic "Parliament of Man" and more

[10] Gérard Unger, *Aristide Briand: Le ferme conciliateur* (Paris, 2005); Jonathan Wright, *Gustav Stresemann: Weimar's Greatest Statesman* (Oxford, 2002).

[11] Richard S. Grayson, *Austen Chamberlain and the Commitment to Europe: British Foreign Policy, 1924–29* (London, 1997); Patrick O. Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace after World War I: America, Britain and the Stabilisation of Europe, 1919–1932* (Cambridge, 2006).

[12] Viscount Cecil [Lord Robert Cecil], *A Great Experiment* (London, 1941), 166–169.

[13] Peter J. Yearwood, "'Consistently with Honour': Great Britain, the League of Nations, and the Corfu Crisis of 1923," *Journal of Contemporary History* 21 (1986): 562.

[14] Austen Chamberlain to Sir Eyre Crowe, February 16, 1925, in Petrie, *Life and Letters*, 2:259; and for Chamberlain's determination to marginalize Cecil and deal with foreign policy himself, see Grayson, *Austen Chamberlain*, 24–26.

FIGURE 1: Meeting on Franco-German understanding, 1928. Facing the camera: Chamberlain, Stresemann, Briand (in profile). Photo by Erich Salomon. Reproduced by permission of bpk / Berlinische Galerie.

like a modified Concert of Europe—the form Chamberlain was convinced it had to take (and that Cohrs shows it for a time did take) to do any useful work.[15]

This is a view with which Steiner agrees. Her massive international history of Europe between 1918 and 1933 offers no support to those—Woodrow Wilson, Cecil, the massed ranks of the League of Nations Union—who saw the League as a decisive break with the discredited great-power politics of the prewar period. The "Geneva system," she points out, "was not a substitute for great-power politics . . . but rather an adjunct to it. It was only a mechanism for conducting multinational diplomacy whose success or failure depended on the willingness of the states, and particularly the most powerful states, to use it."[16] Yet it is a sign of the League's reach and significance in these years, as well as of the growing scholarly interest in its work, that almost every chapter in this very long book gives it some mention. Its handling of international disputes ranging from the Åland Islands to Manchuria, its work stabilizing the Austrian and Hungarian economies, and its efforts to establish rudimentary mechanisms to deal with problems of minority protection and refugees, all receive judicious attention. And from this a more favorable assessment emerges.

[15] Grayson, *Austen Chamberlain*, chap. 4; Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace*, 351.

[16] Zara Steiner, *The Lights That Failed: European International History, 1919–1933* (Oxford, 2005), 299.

Steiner does not overlook the numerous disadvantages hampering the League—among them the formal (if not always actual) absence of the United States, a lack of coercive powers, and a link to a treaty reviled by the defeated states—but she does not agree that it was impotent from the start. Its procedures for dealing with disputes proved flexible enough to resolve problems without arousing resentment; Germany's willingness to join in 1925 was predicated on the assumption that doing so would enhance its status and interests.[17] In this decade, "more doors were opened than shut"—and by shifting away from Wilsonian ideals toward a pragmatic "Concert" system, Geneva helped keep them open.[18]

The relative rehabilitation of the politics of the 1920s that we find in all five of these books has obvious implications for our understanding of the 1930s as well. Responsibility for the catastrophes of the 1930s, Steiner forthrightly concludes, cannot be laid at the feet of the 1919 settlement or the Locarno system, but rests rather on a conjuncture of factors—the death or sidelining of key figures, the Manchurian crisis, and above all the world economic collapse—which together undermined the possibility of finding international solutions to common problems and strengthened the appeal of nationalism. Unger largely agrees, absolving Briand of responsibility for worsening continental relations.[19] Yet there are also hints in these books, especially in Cohrs's account and Wright's study of Stresemann, that the heightened popular valence given foreign policy by the League system, not to mention the expectations and euphoria brought on by Locarno, could compromise the very stabilization it was intended to promote. This is an intriguing idea, one not analytically worked through in any of these books, but well worth exploring.

The League, as we know, fed off and promoted popular mobilization. Wilson and Cecil considered public opinion the ultimate safeguard of collective security, and when we think of the clamor for peace in 1917 and 1918, their view is understandable. Anglo-American supporters massed in popular associations agreed, and the League's practices—indeed, its very structure—reflected their assumptions. The Publicity Section was its largest section, and provided copies of the Covenant, accounts of League activities, and minutes of many of its sessions to the public at minimal cost. Such efforts were supplemented by the assiduous work of a sizable Geneva press corps that included correspondents from many of the major European papers. Unsurprisingly, then, many politicians treated League events as a chance to play the international statesman before a domestic audience. Briand's reputation, in particular, came to rest on rousing speeches made at the League assembly.

As Cohrs, Wright, and Unger all show, however, the mobilization of public opinion brought dangers as well. Wilson, Cecil, and the peacemakers assumed that public opinion would be pacific and hence pro-League, but a strong current of French opinion always held that peace would be best secured by constraining and not rehabilitating Germany, and especially in the wake of the Ruhr occupation and subsequent

[17] Ibid., 359, 420–422.

[18] Ibid., 630. Cohrs, writing out of diplomatic records in national archives, claims that British statesmen and American bankers played the major part in responding to the crisis in Franco-German relations and constructing new mechanisms and agreements. This is no doubt correct, but by overlooking League archives, Cohrs has missed the quiet but important role played by the League's officials (and especially by Drummond) in conciliating Germany and preparing for this shift.

[19] Unger, *Aristide Briand*, 606.

inflation, the German mood was hardly conciliatory either. American bankers, Cohrs points out, found Stresemann, Hans Luther, and Edouard Herriot pragmatic in private (indeed, American willingness to aid in financial reconstruction was predicated on that discovery) but worryingly prone to voicing official distrust and revanchism in public.[20] When Locarno failed to produce the results that those mobilized publics felt they had been promised, suspicion and hostility quickly resurfaced. By 1931, when Briand ran for president of the republic on a pro-League platform, he faced placards denouncing him as the "German" candidate.[21] Stresemann was dead by then, of course, but his room for maneuver had always been even narrower, and in justifying his policies to his right wing, he had tended to hold out the hope that they would make possible the revision of eastern borders. As Wright notes in a careful conclusion, Stresemann's sincere belief that renewed great-power status could be based only on internal democracy and international reconciliation meant that he was willing to postpone those revisionist goals "to an increasingly remote future," but many of his compatriots shared his goals but not his moderation. By courting popular support in this way, Stresemann stoked resentments that he could not control. While he lived, Stresemann was a bulwark against Hitler, but after he died, Hitler was his beneficiary.[22]

A first problem raised by the League's umbilical tie to public opinion was that such opinion could prove to be neither pacific nor particularly easily appeased. A second problem, however, was that statesmen might react to mobilized public opinion by altering not what they *did* but simply what they *said*. European security continued to depend, in the end, on the great powers—but when forced to conduct their business in public, those powers could send representatives to Geneva to profess their loyalty to collective security while calculating their interests much more narrowly at home. No British government had much faith in sanctions, the mechanism presumed to be an effective deterrent to breaches of the Covenant, Steiner remarks, but given public sentiment, no one quite said so.[23] That gulf between public speech and private calculation was just what Stresemann, Briand, and Chamberlain had held their "Locarno tea parties" to bridge, but after their passing, it widened dangerously. It is surely owing to this perverse effect of public opinion that, as Carolyn Kitching shows in *Britain and the Geneva Disarmament Conference*, British statesmen at the intensely publicized 1932 World Disarmament Conference sought less to come to an agreement than to *give the appearance* of trying to come to an agreement, in hopes of thereby avoiding blame for the conference's failure.[24] The League's response to the Abyssinia crisis brought out that gulf between public rhetoric and the careful calculation of national interest even more starkly.

If these new accounts show that statesmen were able to use the League to ease tensions and win time in the 1920s, no such case appears possible for the 1930s. Indeed, the League's porous, publicity-conscious character and consensual, dilatory processes may have played a role in that deterioration. Diplomacy requires reliable interlocutors who can speak for their states; it requires secrecy; and it requires the

[20] Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace*, 239.

[21] Unger, *Aristide Briand*, 582.

[22] Wright, *Gustav Stresemann*, 338–347, 359–364, 508–509, 521–523.

[23] Steiner, *The Lights That Failed*, 358.

[24] Carolyn J. Kitching, *Britain and the Geneva Disarmament Conference* (Basingstoke, 2003), esp. 106.

FIGURE 2: Alois Derso and Emery Kelen's cartoon of the League as the Garden of Eden, with world statesmen as the different animals. From *Le Testament de Genève* (Geneva, 1931). Reproduced by permission of Princeton University Archives, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

ability to make credible threats. The Covenant's security arrangements met none of those criteria. For a time, personal diplomacy by key foreign ministers was able to compensate for those deficiencies, allowing "collective security" to function—usefully—mostly as a legitimizing rhetoric for a fragile but functional "great power" concert system. That drift toward *realpolitik* was much resented by the small states, however, which understandably feared that their fates would be decided by others, and which successfully forced expansion of the Council. They were rewarded by full participation in a system that had become not only impotent but also, by its propensity to generate wordy promises not backed by binding agreements, a force for destabilization.

A FIRST TASK LAID UPON THE LEAGUE was to keep the peace; a second, however, was to reconcile the ideal of a world to be composed of formally equal sovereign states, all operating according to agreed administrative and ethical norms, with the reality of member states of very different types and possessed of vastly unequal geopolitical reach and power. Wilson's promise of self-determination had proved to be a genie let out of a bottle: to his dismay, not just Poles and Serbs, but equally Koreans languishing under Japanese rule, Egyptians under the British, and Armenians under the Turks thought these stirring words applied to them.[25] Which of these claims were met could be a close-run thing: the Baltic states, for example, made it, but Armenia—given the Turkish revolution and the United States' abstention—in the end did not; nor—given French and British imperial interests—were the disputed pledges of Arab independence honored.[26] Sometimes, too, the peacemakers found sovereignty hard to assign, and entrusted the League with direct administration of a few disputed areas (the Saar, Danzig) and with running some special halfway houses—a minorities protection system applied to a swath of new or redrawn East European states and a mandates system set up to oversee former Ottoman and German colonial territories—established to attenuate the independence or limit the subjection of some states close to one or the other side of the line. From the outset, then, and throughout its twenty-five-year history, the League found itself in the business of adjudicating, managing, and delimiting relations of sovereignty. This is a second "narrative" of the League, and a second area of fruitful research.

Some of that research concerns how the League handled the tricky dual task of protecting the populations and legitimating the borders of the states created or recreated in 1919. Those borders reflected some mix of strategic calculation, ethnic considerations, and victors' bounties, but no demarcation line could have unscrambled the ethnic mix of Eastern Europe. Some 25 million minorities lived in the new states; only about two-thirds of the population of reconstituted Poland were Poles.

[25] Erez Manela's *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford, 2007) appeared too late for inclusion in this review, but for two early installments, see Manela, "The Wilsonian Moment and the Rise of Anticolonial Nationalism: The Case of Egypt," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 12, no. 4 (December 2001): 99–122, and "Imagining Woodrow Wilson in Asia: Dreams of East-West Harmony and the Revolt against Empire in 1919," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (December 2006): 1327–1351.

[26] Margaret MacMillan's recent *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York, 2001) provides a good account of the reasoning behind the territorial decisions.

Intensive lobbying (especially by Jewish organizations) and some concern for the fates of those minorities and those borders alike thus drove the peacemakers to impose special treaties guaranteeing some linguistic, educational, and religious autonomy to particular minority groups. Responsibility for monitoring compliance was left to the Council; in practice, however, and as Christoph Gütermann's landmark 1979 study *Das Minderheitenschutzverfahren des Völkerbundes* showed, it was the Secretariat's Minorities Section that, under the forceful leadership of the Norwegian Erik Colban, hammered out a system of supervision.[27] Minorities covered by the treaties were allowed to petition the Council about violations, but such petitions were treated as informational and not juridical documents, were judged "receivable" only under quite restrictive conditions,[28] and were handled confidentially by Council "committees-of-three" and by the Minorities Section, which was usually left to resolve the matter through direct discussion with the state (but not usually the minorities) concerned.

Minorities and their defenders (notably Germany) routinely protested that the system was too secretive and biased toward the "minority states." Yet, while some minor reforms were introduced in 1929, sensitivity toward Polish opinion within the Council meant that appeals for stronger juridical rights and stricter enforcement went unanswered.[29] In 1934, following the Nazi seizure of power, Poland unilaterally repudiated its minorities treaty; petitions from other groups and areas started drying up as well. Although a few specialist studies published during World War II contested that view, by the late 1930s the system was widely seen to have failed, and it was not revived after 1945.[30] Henceforth, it was assumed, protection of individual human rights would make minority rights irrelevant.[31]

The Balkan crises of the 1990s showed how wrong that assumption was, driving researchers to take another look at the interwar minorities protection regime that was the "human rights" regime's rejected progenitor. All three of the important studies reviewed here concede that that minorities regime was indeed biased and secretive; where they disagree is on whether that bias and secrecy was a sign of the system's bankruptcy or—as Colban and his successor Pablo de Azcárate insisted in accounts written during the 1940s—the condition of its (albeit limited) effectiveness.[32] Carole Fink's prize-winning study *Defending the Rights of Others* is probably

[27] Christoph Gutermann, *Das Minderheitenschutzverfahren des Volkerbundes* (Berlin, 1979).

[28] Conditions included that the petition could not call the territorial settlement itself into question, be anonymous, or be expressed in "violent language." For the latter, see Jane Cowan's excellent article "Who's Afraid of Violent Language? Honour, Sovereignty and Claims-Making in the League of Nations," *Anthropological Theory* 33, no. 3 (2003): 271–291.

[29] Germany's involvement in League minority policies is the single best-researched aspect of the system. See Carole Fink, "Defender of Minorities: Germany in the League of Nations, 1926–1933," *Central European History* 5 (1972): 330–357; Christoph M. Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations* (Chicago, 1976), chap. 7; Bastian Schot, *Nation oder Staat? Deutschland und der Minderheitenschutz* (Marburg, 1988).

[30] Jacob Robinson, Oscar Karbach, Max M. Laserson, Nehemiah Robinson, and Marc Vichniak, *Were the Minorities Treaties a Failure?* (New York, 1943); Oscar Janowsky, *Nationalities and National Minorities* (New York, 1945).

[31] For that genealogy, see Mark Mazower, "The Strange Triumph of Human Rights, 1933–1950," *The Historical Journal* 47, no. 2 (2004): 379–389.

[32] Erik Colban, "The Minorities Problem," *The Norseman* 2 (September–October 1944): 314; Pablo de Azcárate, *League of Nations and National Minorities: An Experiment* (Washington, D.C., 1945), 112–121.

the most damning. Fink, who has published important work on Stresemann's minority policies in the 1970s,[33] here treats the entire history of international minority protection regimes in Eastern Europe from the Congress of Berlin to 1938, while paying particular attention to Jewish efforts to shape, and to the consequences of Jewish populations for, those systems.[34] The League system forms only one part of that story, and Fink largely confirms interwar criticisms of its inadequacy. "Bound by the principle of state sovereignty," she writes, League officials "not only guarded the minority states' interests and dismissed all but the most politically explosive complaints; they also blocked outside improvement proposals, shrouded their work in secrecy, and excluded petitioners from every stage in the investigations."[35] That mode of operation hardly served minorities well, and it left Jews—a diasporic population without an ethnically defined "kin state" to exert pressure—particularly at risk. British, French, and American Jewish organizations, and especially Lucien Wolf of the Jewish Board of Deputies, did petition on behalf of (for example) refugee Galician Jews denied citizenship by Austria, or Hungarian Jews subject to *numerus clausus* laws limiting their access to university, but according to Fink, the League usually either accepted the excuses or the purely cosmetic "reforms" of the minority state or found technical grounds to decline to proceed altogether.

Were Jews a special case, or did the system fail minorities in general? In *A Lesson Forgotten*, his study of the German minority in Poland, Christian Raitz von Frentz also comes to a pessimistic conclusion. Some 950 petitions from all minorities were submitted to the League between 1921 and 1939, of which 550 were judged "receivable"; of these, fully 112 were sent by members of this German minority between March 1922 and September 1930 alone.[36] Intractable political conflicts underlay these statistics: the fact that some Poles remained willing in the 1920s to vote for German parties or send their children to German schools deepened the Polish state's commitment to a policy of "de-Germanization," and Germany's decision to champion minorities after its entry into the League, for its part, probably did more to stoke revisionist opinion in Germany than to improve the lot of ethnic Germans in Poland. Yet, while Raitz von Frentz shows that Colban and his team took the minority complaints seriously and dealt with them skillfully, he also insists that some aspects of the general League system (if not the bilateral Upper Silesian system also worked out by Colban) worsened the problem. When it came to petitions about eviction, for example, the time required for the League process enabled Poland to "create irreversible economic and demographic facts" (new Polish owners, German settlers back in Germany), leaving some monetary compensation—but not restitution of land—the only realistic solution. If Raitz von Frentz confirms Fink's view of the system's weakness, though, he disagrees that secrecy was one cause of that ineffectiveness.[37] To the contrary, he concludes, the system was not secretive enough, with the decision in 1929 to *retain* a general Council role in minority protections

[33] See n. 29 above.

[34] Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878–1938* (Cambridge, 2004).

[35] Ibid., 282.

[36] Christian Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten: Minority Protection under the League of Nations—The Case of the German Minority in Poland, 1920–1934* (New York, 1999), 100, 112, 130.

[37] Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, 316.

(rather than to use the committee system to bar border or kin states from the process entirely) creating irresistible pressures toward politicization. Such procedures made the temptation for German leaders to exploit the minority issue for domestic propagandist purposes almost irresistible.[38]

How could two scholars paint such a similar portrait of the system's limitations but account for them so differently? Martin Scheuermann's impressive *Minderheitenschutz contra Konfliktverhütung?* helps to answer this question. Scheuermann worked his way through *all* petitions handled by the system from its establishment to its review in June 1929, and he provides not only a comprehensive register of the 149 judged admissible and the 306 judged inadmissible, short biographies of the section members, and a chart of the petition process, but also an invaluable country-by-country analysis of the system's operation. Scheuermann sustains Gütermann and Raitz von Frentz's high opinion of the section's officials, showing how seriously they treated petitions even from minorities—such as the Ukrainians in Poland—without powerful Council defenders. Yet Scheuermann also confirms (as Colban and Azcárate later claimed in self-justification)[39] that the preeminent goals were political and not humanitarian, with the task of defending the 1919 settlement and the prestige of the League often taking precedence over meaningful relief for petitioners. Just keeping Lithuania in the system, given that small state's anger over the League's inability to force the Poles to withdraw from Vilna, became a major goal; thus, "the system threatened to become an end in itself, with argument more about procedures than substantive issues."[40] Poland's sensitivities led the section to concentrate on damage limitation rather than the letter of the law; likewise, although both Yugoslavia and Greece denied the existence of a "Macedonian" identity and forcefully repressed it, a concern to protect the fragile peace in this region meant that the League somehow found most petitions involving Macedonia "not receivable." League officials also accepted the land reforms that dispossessed Germans in Poland and Estonia and Russians in Lithuania as genuine social measures and pragmatically restricted themselves to trying to secure some compensation for those expropriated.[41]

And yet, for all that, Scheuermann's portrait of the system is more positive than that of Fink or Raitz von Frentz—although admittedly this may be because he is judging it by the realistic standard of what was possible given the great powers' reluctance to get closely involved rather than by the ideal standards set out in the treaties. Colban, in particular, is shown to have had a canny sense of how to play a very weak hand, and Scheuermann agrees with Raitz von Frentz (and disagrees with Fink) on how important it was to restrict (and hence to be able to threaten) public exposure if he was to play it to best advantage.[42] If there were plenty of barely tolerable compromises, then, Colban and his colleagues did prevent smoldering ethnic

[38] Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten*, 238–240.

[39] Colban, "The Minorities Problem," 311; Azcárate, *League of Nations*, 14–16.

[40] "Das System drohte zum Selbstzweck zu werden, gestritten wurde weit mehr um Formalia als um Sachfragen." Martin Scheuermann, *Minderheitenschutz contra Konfliktverhütung? Die Minderheitenpolitik des Völkerbundes in den zwanziger Jahren* (Marburg, 2000), 87.

[41] Ibid., 68–69, 147–148, 285–286, 341–342.

[42] Raitz von Frentz, *A Lesson Forgotten*, 10, 109, 112. Only Yugoslavia and Turkey treated the threat of public exposure with indifference. Scheuermann, *Minderheitenschutz contra Konfliktverhütung?*, 261, 369.

conflicts from escalating into war and tempered a process of ethnic consolidation to which all of these states were committed. In Greece, for example, League pressure prevented the expulsion of some of the Albanian population, while in Romania the combination of Colban's personal diplomacy, threats to bring cases to the Council or the Permanent Court, and fear of the hostility of its Hungarian and Bulgarian neighbors halted (if it did not reverse) a wave of expropriations.[43] Scheuermann also examines Jewish petitions and comes to a more positive assessment of the effectiveness of Wolf's interventions and of Colban's willingness to act than we find in Fink.[44] This may not be an impressive record of minority protection, but given that League officials armed with nothing but persuasive powers were involving themselves in the internal affairs of highly sensitive and nationalist states, the surprising thing is that they accomplished anything at all.

The minorities treaties were applied to fragile and often new states that were nevertheless recognized as sovereign; the mandates system, by contrast, was applied to territories conquered by strong states with preexisting and often extensive colonial empires. Set up to reconcile Wilson's determination to avoid an annexationist peace and his allies' equally powerful desire to hang on to those captured Ottoman or German possessions, the mandates system granted administrative control but not formal sovereignty to those victors, on the understanding that (as article 22 of the Covenant put it) "the well-being and development of [those territories'] peoples form a sacred trust of civilization." Mandatory powers were required to report annually on their fulfillment of that charge, and a "Permanent Mandates Commission" was set up in Geneva to examine those reports and to alert the Council to any problems.[45] Welcomed at its inception as a decisive break with the self-interested imperialism of the pre-1914 period, the mandates system proved to have little discernible effect on the timetable to self-rule, and once the last mandates fell under the supervision of the successor United Nations Trusteeship Council and then moved to independence, the system faded from view. What, then, was its significance?

In *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law*, Antony Anghie approaches that question by situating the system within a genealogy of the role played by international law in managing relations between the Third World and the

[43] Scheuermann, *Minderheitenschutz contra Konfliktverhütung?*, 254–256, 341.

[44] See especially Scheuermann's discussion of the petitions concerning Hungary's *numerus clausus* law, ibid., 213–220. It is not possible to reconcile Fink's account of a Secretariat unresponsive to Wolf's pleas and willing to accept Hungary's lies and evasions with Scheuermann's account of Colban's pressing for a more forceful response, although surely part of the explanation is that Fink's account of this episode is based largely on the archives of the Joint Foreign Committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and Scheuermann's exclusively on the archives of the League, suggesting the limitations of both of those sources. Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others*, 291–292; Scheuermann, *Minderheitenschutz contra Konfliktverhütung?*, 215.

[45] The mandated territories were divided into three groups, ostensibly on the basis of their "level of civilization" and hence capacity for self-government. The Ottoman Middle East became "A" mandates, with Palestine (including Transjordan) and Iraq granted to Britain, and Syria and Lebanon to France. Most of German Africa became "B" mandates, with both Togo and Cameroon partitioned between Britain and France, Rwanda and Burundi handed over to Belgium, and Tanganyika given to the British, to be administered with regard to articulated international humanitarian norms. More remote German areas were granted with few stipulations to Japan and Britain's dominions as "C" mandates: these were South West Africa, awarded to South Africa; German New Guinea, awarded to Australia; Western Samoa, turned over to New Zealand; Germany's Pacific islands north of the Equator, entrusted to Japan; and the phosphate-rich island of Nauru, handed over to the British Empire but administered by Australia.

West over four centuries.[46] International law's core concept of sovereignty, Anghie argues, was always deployed to serve Western interests, and he traces how loyalty to particular European ideals ("Christianity," "civilization," "economic development," "good governance," "a renunciation of terrorism") was at different times made the condition for its exercise. The mandates system interests Anghie because it was, in his view, a crucial stage in this process, being both the moment at which and the mechanism through which direct imperial control of Third World areas gave way to control exercised by international organizations and the World Bank. The institutions of global governance that now limit the sovereignty of Third World states "derive in fundamental ways from the Mandate System," Anghie writes.

> It is in the Mandate System that a centralised authority is established for the task of collecting massive amounts of information from the peripheries, analysing and processing this information by a universal discipline such as economics, and constructing an ostensible universal science, a science by which all societies may be assessed and advised on how to achieve the goal of economic development. Indeed, it is arguable that this "science" could not have come into being without a central institution such as the Mandate System.[47]

Now, there is certainly something in this. In publicizing and scrutinizing the administrative practices of mandatory powers, the mandates system played a part in shaping and then "internationalizing" norms about governance in dependent territories. Yet Anghie's account is deeply frustrating, for his strong claims are based very largely on outdated interwar literature and the proclamations of the Mandates Commission itself and have not been tested against the archives of the mandatory powers, the League's archives in Geneva, or even a reasonable slice of the extensive historiography on the governance of particular mandates.[48] From Anghie's account, one would imagine that the Mandates Commission was a kind of World Bank in embryo, infiltrating agents and funds throughout the Third World and establishing conditions for independence across the globe. It was not. The commission was composed of nine (later ten) "experts," most of whom were ex-colonial governors, and few of whom sought to exercise an independent role. When they did, they found it hard going: as Ania Peter has shown in *William E. Rappard und der Völkerbund*, League Secretary-General Sir Eric Drummond sabotaged early efforts to expand the commission's functions, after which, as Michael Callahan's *Mandates and Empire* shows, the League Council and the mandatory powers colluded to limit its remit further.[49] (Anghie does not cite either of these authors.) Even had the commission

[46] Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge, 2004).
[47] Ibid., 264.
[48] Anghie relies heavily on Quincy Wright's landmark study, which, however impressive, was based only on published records and appeared in 1930. He has not consulted either the League archives or the key government records exploited by Michael D. Callahan, and his repeated condemnation of First World inattention to Third World cultures and histories is particularly irritating in light of his own failure to pay even the most rudimentary attention to those histories. It is impossible to survey the range of excellent historical work on the mandates here, but for a summary of some of it, see Susan Pedersen, "The Meaning of the Mandates System: An Argument," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 32, no. 4 (2006): 560–582.
[49] Ania Peter, *William E. Rappard und der Völkerbund* (Bern, 1973), esp. 84–121; a brief English-language summary of Peter's book appears as "William E. Rappard and the League of Nations," in *The League of Nations in Retrospect: Proceedings of the Symposium* (Berlin, 1983), 221–241; Michael D. Callahan, *Mandates and Empire: The League of Nations and Africa, 1914–1931* (Brighton, 1993), 123–129.

wished to enforce a new system of colonial control (as opposed to promulgating new ideals of administration), it had no agents with which to carry out such deployment, commissioners being barred from conducting fact-finding missions in the mandates, or indeed even from visiting them except in a private capacity. True, the commission could request information from a mandatory power and subject its representative to a yearly interview, but whether these modest powers constituted new and sweeping "technologies" of rule is at best debatable. Anghie has, importantly, grasped the way the mandates system helped define a "damaged" form of sovereignty for the poorer nations of the world, but to understand how those concepts affected administrative practice (and they did in fact do so), one must look beyond the system's own self-justifying rhetoric to negotiations and struggles over governance that took place within the imperial capitals and the mandatory territories alike.

Callahan gives us part of this more complete story. His *Mandates and Empire* (1993) was a study of French and British policy regarding African mandates until 1931; in *A Sacred Trust* (2004), he brings that story forward to 1946.[50] Callahan has delved into the publications of the Permanent Mandates Commission, but he has a political historian's healthy skepticism of official documents and has tracked policymaking through confidential Colonial Office and Foreign Office records, providing us with the best account we are likely to get of the French and British "official mind" about mandates. That "mind," he shows, was pragmatic and instrumental, with calculations of national interest paramount. The need to manage or placate Germany figured largely in British mandatory policy, for example, with Britain agreeing to bring a German member onto the Commission in 1927 and even periodically contemplating trying to find (as the left-leaning League supporter Philip Noel-Baker suggested in 1931) "two pieces of Africa which could be handed over simultaneously under mandate to Germany and Italy respectively."[51] Yet Callahan insists that such strategic calculation was never the whole story, and that Britain and France responded to League oversight by developing policies in their mandated territories that were "more restrained and more internationally-oriented than those in the rest of their empires in tropical Africa."[52]

Callahan marshals evidence to corroborate this point. Sensitivity to international opinion led France to exempt its mandates from military recruiting, strengthened Britain's desire to resist white settler pressures to amalgamate Tanganyika and Kenya, and drove both states to keep forced labor requirements below those in the colonies. Yet it is worth noting that this more paternalistic record tended both to legitimize (and not shorten) British and French rule and to undermine Africa's few independent black states. Some humanitarians and liberals thus responded to revelations of forced labor in Liberia by calling for a United States mandate over that country (a painful paradox better explored by Ibrahim Sundiata than by Callahan);[53] others hoped to avert the Italo-Abyssinian war by granting Italy a mandate over parts

[50] Michael D. Callahan, *A Sacred Trust: The League of Nations and Africa, 1929–1946* (Brighton, 2004).
[51] Minute by Noel-Baker, February 10, 1931, quoted in ibid., 57. Noel-Baker hoped to use such a "colonial deal" to ease disarmament negotiations.
[52] Callahan, *A Sacred Trust*, 3.
[53] Ibrahim Sundiata, *Brothers and Strangers: Black Zion, Black Slavery, 1914–1940* (Durham, N.C., 2003).

of Ethiopia. The fact that politicians could imagine using mandates so very instrumentally (Neville Chamberlain's "colonial offer" to Hitler being another extreme example)[54] suggests that, for all his very useful work, Callahan may not have weighed the balance between paternalism and geopolitical calculation quite accurately. That paternalistic record would, moreover, look less strong had Callahan considered Belgian rule in Rwanda and Burundi and South African administration of South West Africa (as he should have done in two books subtitled *The League of Nations and Africa*). The instrumentalization of ethnic division in the former case and the wholesale land seizures, labor controls, and physical repression of the latter were hardly reconcilable with the ideals of the "sacred trust," but the Mandates Commission could not deflect either administration from its chosen course. The verdict that "mandates meant . . . a greater emphasis on the interests of Africans" is hard to square with that record.[55]

Those difficulties of generalization worsen, moreover, when we consider the Middle East cases discussed in Nadine Méouchy and Peter Sluglett's invaluable edited collection *The British and French Mandates in Comparative Perspectives*.[56] The essays therein are varied, dealing with subjects ranging from administrative practices, to economic projects, to the uses made of ethnography and medicine, to the course of national and ethnic movements; taken together, however, they underscore the hazards of generalizing about the mandates system even in a single region, and the folly of doing so on the basis of the publications of the Permanent Mandates Commission alone. Certainly, several of the archivally based essays confirm just how strategically the great powers acted: as Gerard Khoury points out, Robert de Caix could scarcely have been clearer about France's reasons to oppose the creation of a unified Arab state when he wrote on April 11, 1920, that "the peace of the world would be on the whole better secured if there were a certain number of small states in the Middle East, whose inter-relation could be controlled here by France and there by Britain, who would be administered with the greatest internal autonomy, and who would not have the aggressive tendencies of large, unified national states."[57] As Pierre-Jean Luizard shows, Britain was equally strategic, moving swiftly to repress Kurdish independence movements and construct a unified Iraqi state out of three Ottoman provinces.[58] Yet calculation did not always point in the same direction: thus, as Sluglett shows, while the French remained ideologically committed to Syria despite massive local opposition and negligible economic gains, the British pragmatically nurtured a class of Iraqi clients able to safeguard British interests under conditions

[54] Callahan, *A Sacred Trust*, 134–149, faults Chamberlain's naivete about the character of the German regime, but otherwise sees his "colonial offer" as driven both by European concerns and (less plausibly) by a genuine desire to "further internationalize and reform European imperialism": 147.

[55] Ibid., 4.

[56] Nadine Méouchy and Peter Sluglett, *The British and French Mandates in Comparative Perspectives/ Les mandats français et anglais dans une perspective comparative* (Leiden, 2004).

[57] "La paix du monde serait en somme mieux assurée s'il y avait en Orient un certain nombre de petits États dont les relations seraient contrôlées ici par la France et là par l'Angleterre, qui s'administreraient avec le maximum d'autonomie intérieure, et qui n'auraient pas les tendances agressives des grands États nationaux unitaires." Gerard D. Khoury, "Robert de Caix et Louis Massignon: Deux visions de la politique française au Levant en 1920," in Méouchy and Sluglett, *The British and French Mandates*, 169.

[58] Pierre-Jean Luizard, "Le mandat britannique en Irak: Une rencontre entre plusieurs projets politiques," ibid., 361–384.

of nominal independence.[59] Nor was one nation's policy necessarily uniform across mandates, for Britain put through a far-sighted land reform in Transjordan while essentially "refeudalizing" Iraq.[60] The mandates system, *pace* Anghie and Callahan, had no consistent impact on either governance or economic policy.

But does this mean that the system was unimportant, or could we perhaps be asking the wrong question? Anghie and Callahan strain too hard to detect uniform impact when what locally grounded studies show is that the system affected different mandatory powers, and different mandates, differently. Too little effort has been made—except in Sluglett's essay—to explain that variation. Such an explanation is possible, but it must take into account not only local factors and the interests of mandatory powers, but equally how the discursive (and not coercive) practices of mandatory oversight shaped interests and actions alike. There are revealing glimpses in these books of local inhabitants using the petition process to garner international support, and of opinion-sensitive governments forestalling criticism by adjusting course. But no comprehensive account of that process of local claims-making and political learning, and of the variable metropolitan response, has yet been written.

Taken together, these studies of the minorities and mandates systems bring out the paradoxical and seemingly conflicting nature of the League's responsibilities in the realm of state-building and sovereignty. On the one hand, the League was to promote emerging norms related to trusteeship and human rights; on the other hand, it was to do so without undermining the principle of state sovereignty. Colban's quiet personal diplomacy and the Mandates Commission's more distant but public scrutiny sought to reconcile those two goals—and, as we have seen, sometimes managed to do so. When that happened, however, it was because minority states or mandatory powers concluded that their national interests or international reputations would be enhanced by their (sometimes purely verbal or formal) compliance; when they concluded otherwise, they suffered few consequences, because sanctions for violations of the mandate or even for outright repudiation of the minorities treaties were (as Poland discovered in 1934) virtually nonexistent. Yet, if these League systems could not coerce states or override sovereignty, they did contribute powerfully to the articulation and diffusion of international norms, some of which proved lasting. If the principle of designating protected groups by ethnicity did not survive the demise of the minorities system, the delegitimation of forcible conquest as a foundation for sovereignty on which the mandates system was—however reluctantly—based is now broadly accepted.[61] And where norms and national interests were easily reconciled, the achievements of the League would be more substantial.

[59] Peter Sluglett, "Les mandats/The Mandates: Some Reflections on the Nature of the British Presence in Iraq (1914–1932) and the French Presence in Syria (1918–1946)," ibid., 99–127; Toby Dodge, "International Obligation, Domestic Pressure and Colonial Nationalism: The Birth of the Iraqi State under the Mandate System," ibid., 142–164.

[60] Michael R. Fischbach, "The British Land Program, State-Societal Cooperation, and Popular Imagination in Transjordan," ibid., 477–495; Luizard, "Le mandat britannique," ibid., 383.

[61] Despite the mandatory powers' clear wish to avoid the question, the League Council felt forced in 1929 to state clearly, in answer to South African attempts to assert sovereignty in South West Africa, that the mandatory power was "not sovereign" in the mandated territory—a judgment that (together with its rulings in the Manchurian and Abyssinian cases) helped to delegitimize conquest as a foundation for sovereignty. For this, see Susan Pedersen, "Settler Colonialism at the Bar of the League of Nations," in Caroline Elkins and Susan Pedersen, eds., *Settler Colonialism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 121.

In addition to peacekeeping and managing relations of sovereignty, the League had a third task: fostering international cooperation to address transnational problems or traffics that had been the subject of humanitarian concern and rudimentary intergovernmental collaboration before the war. The League's founders expected this to be a minor adjunct to its work, but serious postwar humanitarian crises and the continued absence of the United States combined to alter that balance. Overstretched voluntary organizations and beset newly established states could not cope alone with the waves of refugees, epidemics, and economic crises sweeping their lands; the great powers, unwilling to commit themselves too deeply, gladly dropped some of these issues at the League's door. Secretary-General Drummond watched this expanding involvement with anxiety. Only two or three of the Covenant's twenty-plus articles dealt with humanitarian and technical activities, the tidy-minded Drummond protested to a meeting of his directors in May 1921.[62] But Jean Monnet, the architect of European union, who (it is often forgotten) spent the early 1920s in Geneva as Drummond's deputy, disagreed, and the ambitious and clever young men (and one woman) appointed to head up the various League technical bodies were not inclined to sit on the sidelines either. Albert Thomas was already building up his empire at the International Labor Organization; the Dutch jurist Joost Van Hamel was working out the contours of the Permanent Court of International Justice; and Robert Haas, Arthur Salter, Rachel Crowdy, and Ludwik Rajchman were busy assembling the communications, economic, social, and health organizations of the League. Some of these institutional entrepreneurs proved to be more talented than others, and some of their creations faltered amid the heightened political conflict and economic nationalism of the 1930s, but on the whole, criticisms of the League's security capacities lent its specialized organs added prestige. By the late 1930s, more than 50 percent of the League's budget went to this misnamed "technical" work, with plans afoot to relocate those functions within an autonomous body incorporating member states and nonmembers alike. The war put an end to those plans, but the institutions themselves survived, metamorphosing into United Nations bodies after 1945.

The history of this third "League of Nations" is not well known. Officials wrote accounts of particular organizations at the behest of the Carnegie Endowment in the 1940s,[63] but with the exception of the articles of Martin Dubin and the symposium on the League held in Geneva in 1980, no synthetic study has been written.[64] A new generation of international historians, sometimes influenced by "liberal institutionalist" international relations theory (which itself has a direct genealogical link to the League),[65] has, however, begun publishing well-researched reassessments of various

[62] League of Nations Archives [Microfilm Collection], Directors' Meeting minutes, 31/10/15, May 18, 1921.

[63] This series included Azcárate, *League of Nations and National Minorities*; Bertil A. Renborg (former chief of section in the League's Drug Control Service), *International Drug Control* (Washington, D.C., 1947); Martin Hill (member of section of the Economic Section of the League), *The Economic and Financial Organization of the League of Nations* (Washington, D.C., 1946); and several other works.

[64] Martin David Dubin, "Transgovernmental Processes in the League of Nations," *International Organization* 37, no. 3 (1983): 469–493; Dubin, "Toward the Bruce Report: The Economic and Social Programs of the League of Nations in the Avenol Era," in *The League of Nations in Retrospect*, 42–72, and other essays in that volume.

[65] The crucial figure here is David Mitrany, whose involvement with the British League of Nations Union and work for the Carnegie Endowment was the basis for his "functionalist" argument that international stability would be better enhanced through intergovernmental cooperation on specific technical or policy matters than it would be through "collective security"—an argument that, if recast in terms of the liberal institutionalism of Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, would not be light-years from that put forward by Anne-Marie Slaughter. See Mitrany, *A Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization* (London, 1943); Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton, N.J., 2004). Martin Dubin draws attention to the genealogy of liberal institutionalist theory in "Transgovernmental Processes," 469, 492–493.

[66] Claudena M. Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime* (Oxford, 1995).

[67] Paul Weindling, ed., *International Health Organizations and Movements, 1918–1939* (Cambridge, 1995).

[68] Patricia Clavin and Jens-Wilhelm Wessels, "Transnationalism and the League of Nations: Understanding the Work of Its Economic and Financial Organization," *Contemporary European History* 14, no. 4 (2005): 465–492.

[69] Anthony M. Endres and Grant A. Fleming, *International Organizations and the Analysis of Economic Policy, 1919–1950* (Cambridge, 2002).

[70] William B. McAllister, *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: An International History* (London, 2000).

[71] Carol Miller, "The Social Section and Advisory Committee on Social Questions of the League of Nations," in Weindling, *International Health Organizations and Movements*, 154–176; Barbara Metzger, "The League of Nations and Human Rights: From Practice to Theory" (Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge University, 2001); Metzger, "Towards an International Human Rights Regime during the Inter-War Years: The League of Nations' Combat of Traffic in Women and Children," in Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine, and Frank Trentmann, eds., *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism, c. 1880–1950* (Basingstoke, 2007), 54–79.

[72] Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L'UNESCO oubliée: La Société des Nations et la coopération intellectuelle (1919–1946)* (Paris, 1999).

branches of this work. Claudena Skran's *Refugees in Inter-War Europe* is a particularly fine example of this genre,[66] and the League's Health Organization received similarly thoughtful treatment in Paul Weindling's edited collection *International Health Organizations and Movements, 1918–1939*.[67] Patricia Clavin and Jens-Wilhelm Wessels have traced the development and functioning of the League's Economic and Financial Organization in "Transnationalism and the League of Nations,"[68] complementing Anthony M. Endres and Grant A. Fleming's study of the intellectual significance of the work done there.[69] William B. McAllister's *Drug Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century* provides a thorough narrative of the development of the League's conventions and organizations regulating the traffic in drugs,[70] and while the Social Section's efforts to combat sexual trafficking and promote child welfare have received less attention, Carol Miller's article in Weindling's collection and Barbara Metzger's 2001 Cambridge dissertation and 2007 essay are important beginnings.[71] In 1999, the League's Paris-based bodies set up to foster intellectual cooperation finally found their historian,[72] but a comparable study of its Rome-based Cinematography Institute remains to be written. The work of the Communications and Transit Organization likewise awaits investigation.

These new studies establish the importance of those "technical" sections. The effort at intellectual cooperation, which engaged Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, and Marie Curie, among others, was more symbolically significant than effective, but the Economic and Financial Organization, which had a staff of sixty by 1931, built up a solid record of achievement. Its heroic early days, when Salter, Monnet, and their allies hammered out the Austrian and Hungarian recovery plans, could not last; but the section produced pioneering statistical series and analyses, and facilitated much collective research and discussion (if not action) about later economic crises

and trade questions. League bodies dealing with transnational traffics—opium, refugees, prostitutes—also proved surprisingly effective. All made serious efforts to gather data on their subject, establishing the right of the League to interrogate governments and carry out on-site visits; all (conflicts between regulationist and liberal states on questions of prostitution, and between producer, consumer, and manufacturer states on the drug question notwithstanding) managed to hammer out basic agreements; all attempted to monitor compliance with those conventions; and in the cases of opium trafficking and refugees, League bodies operated the mechanisms of control as well. Before 1914, refugees had no distinctive status or agreed rights; by 1939, however, the League and other actors had developed a set of standards, rules, and practices (including the landmark "Nansen passport") that, Skran contends, provided "legal protection and durable solutions for more than one million refugees."[73]

We need to ask, however, whether the whole was more than the sum of the parts: given their specialized mandates, did these bodies set in motion a different dynamic of international cooperation? Comparison suggests that they were indeed distinctive in three ways. First, the League's technical areas proved to be more expansive, and more genuinely global, than its security or state-building operations. The United States cooperated with the work of the Health, Opium, and Social sections; Germany and even the Soviet Union worked with the Health Organization long before they joined the League; Japan continued to work with most technical bodies after its withdrawal. That wider participation was not always easy to manage; especially in the early days, as McAllister shows, crusading Americans eager to crack down on the supply of drugs were as likely to wreck agreements as to foster them.[74] Yet it is surely significant that while the security arrangements deterred some states from joining the League and drove other states out of it, the technical organizations brought nonmembers in and mitigated the organization's transparent Eurocentrism. Not that the League's officials were cultural relativists *avant la lettre*: to the contrary, the health officials were strong proponents of a Western biomedical/public health episteme. They were, however, determined to spread the benefits of Western knowledge across the globe, and through a series of pragmatic but far-sighted innovations—including the establishment of an epidemiological station in Singapore, the provision of technical assistance to China, and training for medical staff—they did much to expand the reach and reputation of the League.[75]

The specialized bodies reconciled state interests and the demands of mobilized publics more successfully than the security bodies as well, often by incorporating experts and activists directly into their work. States still asserted their interests and had plenty of opportunities to exercise what Skran terms "veto power,"[76] but a desire to share burdens and avoid public criticism predisposed states and League officials

[73] Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe*, 292.

[74] See especially McAllister's account of the counterproductive effect of U.S. Representative Stephen Porter's intransigent stance at the 1923 Opium Advisory Committee meetings and the 1924 Geneva opium conferences; *Drug Diplomacy*, 50–78.

[75] Dubin, "The League of Nations Health Organization," in Weindling, *International Health Organizations and Movements*, 56–80; Lenore Manderson, "Wireless Wars in the Eastern Arena: Epidemiological Surveillance, Disease Prevention and the Work of the Eastern Bureau of the League of Nations Health Organization, 1925–1942," ibid., 109–133; Paul Weindling, "Social Medicine at the League of Nations Health Organization and the International Labour Office Compared," ibid., 134–153.

[76] Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe*, 279–281.

alike to seek to involve (and sometimes thus to neutralize) experts, campaigners, and even critics. Voluntary organizations with strong records of practical work or strong claims to expertise (the ancestors of today's NGOs) thus had easy access to key League officials and sometimes statutory representation on League bodies; League officials, in turn, used their ties to wealthy private philanthropies to compensate for member states' parsimony. Both of the League's very substantial investigations into the traffic in women and children were funded by the American Bureau of Social Hygiene, for example, while the Rockefeller Foundation underwrote many of the Health Organization's programs for fifteen years.[77] Finally, where goodwill was present but state interests were not closely involved, a single crusading individual or organization could have a decisive impact. The role played by the founder of the Save the Children Fund, Eglantyne Jebb, in drafting and securing League backing for the 1924 Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child is perhaps the most striking example of such humanitarian entrepreneurialism, but British anti-slavery activists were also able to exploit personal contacts in Geneva and the sensibilities of the Assembly to promote more stringent definitions of and prohibitions against slavery.[78]

Yet this degree of outside initiative was not the rule; on most issues—and this is the third point—officials played the key roles. Sometimes they were kept on a tight leash: as Andrew Webster points out, the League officials, small-country statesmen and experts who kept disarmament negotiations alive across the entire period, found their work undone and their opinions trumped by "the imperatives of national interest . . . time and again."[79] By contrast, Skran insists, Fridtjof Nansen and the Secretariat exercised considerable initiative on refugee matters,[80] and the tight-knit group of economists under Arthur Salter also charted an ambitious course shielded by a rhetoric of impartial expertise.[81] Rachel Crowdy, the sole woman appointed to head a section, not coincidentally had a much tougher time: her willingness to bring in voluntary organizations was a strategically sensible reaction to a lack of institutional support and chronic under-funding, but it branded her as an "enthusiast" and probably shortened her career. By contrast, while Ludwik Rajchman's ambitions for the Health Organization made some politicians and his own secretaries-general uncomfortable, his high reputation among experts and his ability to secure independent funds helped him survive politically motivated attacks (Rajchman was left-leaning and Jewish) until 1939.

The League's specialized agencies proved, then, to be more expansive, flexible,

[77] On the ABSH funding, see Metzger, "The League of Nations and Human Rights," 94, 124; on the Rockefeller funding, see Dubin, "The League of Nations Health Organization," 72–73, and Weindling, "Social Medicine," 137.

[78] On Jebb, see Metzger, "The League of Nations and Human Rights," 165–176; on anti-slavery, see Kevin Grant, *A Civilised Savagery: Britain and the New Slaveries in Africa, 1884–1926* (London, 2005), 159–166, and Susan Pedersen, "The Maternalist Moment in British Colonial Policy: The Controversy over 'Child Slavery' in Hong Kong, 1917–1941," *Past & Present*, no. 171 (May 2001), 171–202.

[79] Andrew Webster, "The Transnational Dream: Politicians, Diplomats and Soldiers in the League of Nations' Pursuit of International Disarmament, 1920–1938," *Contemporary European History* 14, no. 4 (2005): 493–518, 517. Note, however, David R. Stone's claim that when their own rights to purchase arms were involved, the small states proved as unwilling to see limits placed on their freedoms as were the great powers. See Stone, "Imperialism and Sovereignty: The League of Nations' Drive to Control the Global Arms Trade," *Journal of Contemporary History* 35, no. 2 (2000): 213–230.

[80] Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe*, 279, 286, 287.

[81] This point is stressed by Clavin and Wessels, "Transnationalism and the League of Nations," 480–481.

creative, and successful than its security or state-building arrangements; they were also more lasting. Although Drummond's mediocre successor, Joseph Avenol, dismissed much of the League's staff shortly before his own forced resignation in 1940, some of the technical organizations were given refuge abroad, and even where the war disrupted League activity (as with its trafficking, health, and refugee work), the United Nations quickly rebuilt on League foundations. The World Health Organization succeeded the League Health Organization; UNESCO took over from the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation; the Trusteeship Council inherited the responsibilities of the Mandates Commission; the 1949 United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons codified language drafted before the war; even the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child cited the 1924 Geneva Declaration as its precedent.[82] Likewise, while the United Nations' refugee regime was from its origins much more comprehensive and ambitious than the League's, UNHCR's basic structure and practices—its insistence on political neutrality, the concentration of authority in "a man and a staff"—still bear Nansen's imprint.[83] Many of the agreements and institutions that today regulate movements of peoples, services, and goods around the globe took shape in Geneva between the wars.

WHICH BRINGS US, OF COURSE, TO THE POINT MADE AT THE OUTSET, about the need to examine more intensively the personnel, mechanisms, and culture of that Geneva-centered world. Other cities between the wars were much more polyglot and cosmopolitan: it was in Geneva, however, that internationalism was enacted, institutionalized, and performed. That internationalism had its holy text (the Covenant); it had its high priests and prophets (especially Nansen and Briand); it had its benefactors and fellow travelers; in the caricaturist Emery Kelen and the photographer Erich Salomon, it found its most brilliant chroniclers.[84] There was an annual pilgrimage each September, when a polyglot collection of national delegates, claimants, lobbyists, and journalists descended on this once-placid bourgeois town. But for all its religious overtones, interwar internationalism depended more on structure than on faith: a genuinely transnational officialdom, and not visionaries or even statesmen, was its beating heart. Secretariat members briefed the politicians, organized the meetings, wrote the press releases, and, meeting on the golf links or in the bars, kept open that "back channel" of confidential information on which all complex networks rely. The Secretariat had its spies and time-servers, of course, but for the most part Drummond chose well: national politicians fulminating against its bias or expense usually ended up impressed by its efficiency and impartiality. Officials led statesmen to recognize common interests and forge agreements; against the odds,

[82] For those conventions, see Metzger, "The League of Nations and Human Rights," 163, 176.

[83] Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe*, 296.

[84] Emery Kelen's *Peace in Their Time: Men Who Led Us In and Out of War, 1914–1945* (New York, 1963) contains many Derso/Kelen cartoons, and remains one of the best portraits of that Genevan world. Originals of many of the cartoons, including those reproduced in this issue, are in the Princeton University Archives, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library; I am grateful to the Princeton University Library for permission to use these images. For an excellent recent compilation of Salomon's work, including many of the Geneva photographs, see Janos Frecot, ed., *Erich Salomon 'Mit Frack und Linse durch Politik und Gesellschaft': Photographien, 1928–1938* (Munich, 2004).

they fought to sustain that particular blend of pragmatism and hope that became known as the "spirit of Geneva."

We still know too little about how those relationships worked. Much of the historiography of the League has been written from the standpoint of national interests and out of national archives;[85] we have been slow to reverse the optic. Studies have been written (including those mentioned here) on several League sections, and biographies exist of the three secretaries-general and a few other League officials (although unfortunately not of Colban or Crowdy),[86] but the only full account of the Secretariat is more than sixty years old, and many of the matters discussed there—the degree of section autonomy, the touchy question of the national distribution of positions, the endemic problems of infiltration, leaks, and "spying"—have never been followed up.[87] Likewise, while some work has been done on the rise of nongovernmental organizations and of lobbying efforts in Geneva,[88] such ephemeral but significant associations as the Congress of European Minorities or the Brussels-based International Federation of League of Nations Societies await investigation. And the great dramatic moments in the Assembly or the Council—Italian journalists shouting down Haile Selassie, Stefan Lux killing himself to protest Nazi treatment of Jews—have been lost to view.

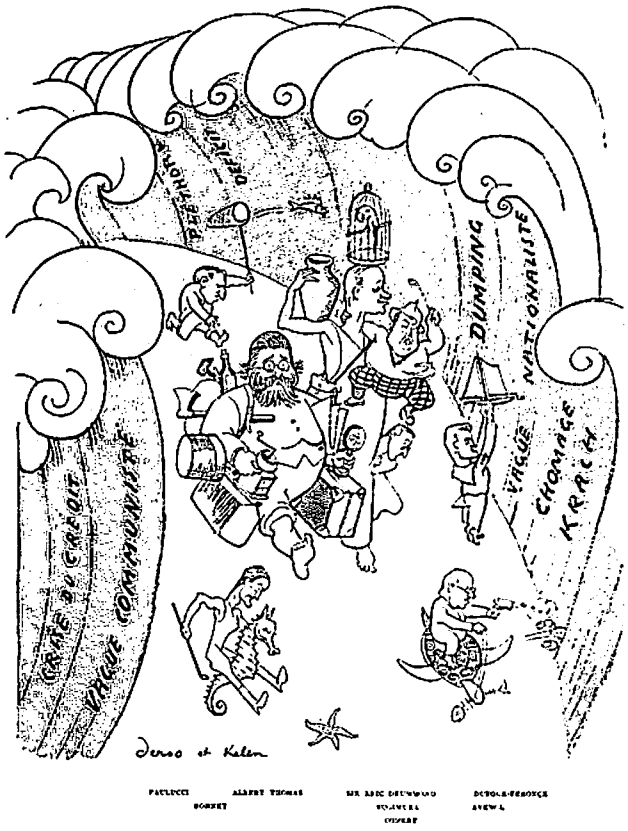
Here, as well, however, there are encouraging signs. Two recent studies—one of a rank-and-file member of the Secretariat, the other of Geneva's French contingent—bring that internationalist world to life. In 1928, an idealistic young Canadian woman working for the Student Christian Movement talked her way into a job with the League's Information Section. Mary McGeachy's colorful life inspired Frank Moorhouse's vivid historical novel *Grand Days* (surely the only work of fiction to

[85] Useful nation-centered studies include Kimmich, *Germany and the League of Nations*; Richard Veatch, *Canada and the League of Nations* (Toronto, 1975); S. Shepard Jones, *The Scandinavian States and the League of Nations* (1939; repr., New York, 1969); Michael Kennedy, *Ireland and the League of Nations* (Dublin, 1996); Sara Pienaar, *South Africa and International Relations between the Two World Wars: The League of Nations Dimension* (Johannesburg, 1987); and Warren F. Kuehl and Lynne K. Dunn, *Keeping the Covenant: American Internationalists and the League of Nations, 1920–1939* (Kent, Ohio, 1997).

[86] Biographies of Drummond and Avenol are cited in n. 2 above. For Sean Lester, see Douglas Gageby, *The Last Secretary General: Sean Lester and the League of Nations* (Dublin, 1999). Conflicting accounts of Monnet's years at the League (both based on Monnet's own writings) are found in Eric Roussel, *Jean Monnet* (Paris, 1996), and Jean Monnet, *Mémoires* (Paris, 1976). For Rappard, see Peter, *William E. Rappard*, and Victor Monnier, *William E. Rappard: Défenseur des libertés, serviteur de son pays et de la communauté internationale* (Geneva, 1995); and for Rajchman, see Marta Aleksandra Balinska, *Une vie pour l'humanitaire: Ludwik Rajchman, 1881–1965* (Paris, 1995), rev. English ed., *For the Good of Humanity: Ludwik Rajchman, Medical Statesman* (Budapest, 1998). Particularly useful memoirs are Salvador de Madariaga, *Morning without Noon* (Hampshire, 1974), and Arthur Salter, *Personality in Politics: Studies of Contemporary Statesmen* (London, 1947).

[87] Egon F. Ranshofen-Wertheimer, *The International Secretariat: A Great Experiment in International Administration* (Washington, D.C., 1945). With the opening of the Secretariat's personnel files a few years ago, a comprehensive new study is possible.

[88] For the rise of NGOs, see, e.g., Akira Iriye, *Cultural Internationalism and World Order* (Baltimore, Md., 1997), and Iriye, *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley, Calif., 2002); and for international women's organizations, see Carol Miller, "Lobbying the League: Women's International Organizations and the League of Nations" (D.Phil., Oxford, 1992), and Miller, "Geneva—the Key to Equality: Inter-war Feminists and the League of Nations," *Women's History Review* 3, no. 2 (1994): 219–245.



Le Secrétariat de la Société des Nations traverse la Mer Rouge à pieds secs.

FIGURE 3: Alois Derso and Emery Kelen's cartoon of the League Secretariat holding back the waters of the crises of the early 1930s. Albert Thomas and Eric Drummond are in the center. From *Le Testament de Genève* (Geneva, 1931). Reproduced by permission of Princeton University Archives, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

explain the League's filing system!);[89] now Mary Kinnear has given McGeachy a biography of her own.[90] Like most of the Secretariat's considerable numbers of women, McGeachy held a junior position and—to her frustration—was never promoted to the coveted rank of "member of section."[91] She was given significant responsibility, however, acting as liaison with the international women's organizations, representing the League and the ILO at conferences, and giving public lectures and briefing politicians during several extended Canadian tours. When the Secretariat fell apart, McGeachy went on to the wartime Ministry of Economic Warfare in London and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and in later life worked with the International Council of Women.

Through McGeachy's life, we see how individuals both made and were remade by internationalism—but could that internationalism temper national feeling in turn? *Les Français au service de la Société des Nations*, Christine Manigand's 2003 study of those French politicians and officials active in Geneva, addresses this question.[92] In the early 1920s, most French politicians viewed Wilsonian ideals with skepticism: to their mind, the League was there to uphold French security and enforce the stringent restraints placed on Germany by the Treaty of Versailles. In a crucial work, *La Société des Nations et les intérêts de la France (1920–1924)*, Marie-Renée Mouton showed how hard the Quai d'Orsay worked to promote this vision[93]—so hard, indeed, that by the mid-1920s, the British would no longer go along. Yet, as Manigand (working, like Mouton, largely from Quai d'Orsay archives) shows, such setbacks did not lead to French disengagement; instead, as ties in Geneva became ever more multifarious and weblike, they came to have a force of their own. Geneva's French contingent was, as she shows, itself a kind of network within a network, incorporating not only the French members of the Secretariat and the ILO, and the politicians seconded to France's mission to the League or serving as Assembly delegates, but also a rich collection of journalists, intellectuals, and wealthy political hostesses. Working in Geneva did not make these men and women less protective of French interests, but it did change how they defined them—and it was this change, in turn, that underwrote the rapprochement of the mid-1920s. Manigand does not systematically analyze that process of reorientation, but by following her as she moves among the League's French officials and well-wishers, we begin to see how—if only sometimes, and then only for a while—it became possible.

THE BOOKS AND ESSAYS REVIEWED HERE have not rehabilitated the League across the board. They have, however, provided a more complex and variegated portrait of its operation. The League was an association of sovereign states that many of its sup-

[89] Frank Moorhouse, *Grand Days* (Sydney, 1993); see also his sequel *Dark Palace* (Milsons Point, New South Wales, 2000), and Albert Cohen's novel set at the League in the 1930s, *Belle du Seigneur* (Paris, 1986).

[90] Mary Kinnear, *Woman of the World: Mary McGeachy and International Cooperation* (Toronto, 2004).

[91] The interesting and complex question of the employment of women in the Secretariat is discussed by Miller, "Lobbying the League" and "Geneva—the Key to Equality," but deserves a full study now that the personnel files have been opened.

[92] Christine Manigand, *Les Français au service de la Société des Nations* (Bern, 2003).

[93] Marie-Renée Mouton, *La Société des Nations et les intérêts de la France (1920–1924)* (Bern, 1995).

porters hoped would evolve into something much greater—a genuine association of peoples, an embryonic world government. Those hopes were always utopian, for the League was founded upon and remained devoted to the principle of state sovereignty; indeed, insofar as these ideals led politicians to play to the stands or alienated the great powers, they may have been counterproductive. Competing national interests were not easy to reconcile, and as we have seen, on some matters—security, minority rights—the glare of publicity and pressure from mobilized publics probably narrowed the scope for pragmatic agreement.

Yet for all that, the League mattered. In some areas—epidemic management, drug control, refugees—it midwifed regimes that exist to this day, and in other areas it articulated norms that, very partially observed at the time, have gained in authority. If that is the case, however, it is due in large part to the innovative structure and processes of the institution itself. Continuities of policy exist, but the continuities of petitioning and oversight, the incorporation of expert and humanitarian opinion and publicity, are still more marked. Only by examining these processes and structures, tracing their capillaries through the Secretariat's halls and into voluntary organizations and national bureaucracies alike, do we come to appreciate just how profoundly and lastingly they have shaped our still-state-structured, but also increasingly globalized, world.

The discredited League held its final assembly in 1946 and formally ceased to exist one year later. Its three secretaries-general, sharing its stigma, played no further role in international life.[94] But if we shine our spotlight just one tier down, picking out some of the Secretariat members mentioned here, we find Monnet and Salter coordinating Allied shipping during World War II (as they had in World War I); Salter, Rajchman, and McGeachy all at the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration by 1944; Rajchman busy founding UNICEF at the war's end; and those "minorities" experts Colban and Azcárate heading off on United Nations missions to Kashmir and Palestine soon thereafter. Many other members of the Secretariat's diminished staff also made their way into the offices of the United Nations.

The League was the training ground for these men and women—the place where they learned skills, built alliances, and began to craft that fragile network of norms and agreements by which our world is regulated, if not quite governed. Pragmatic by nature, they shifted organizations with little fanfare, shaking off the discredited League name but taking its practices with them. But they left one treasure behind. In Geneva, still underused, sits the archive of the world's first sustained and consequential experiment in internationalism. The works discussed here have sent a few plumb lines into its depths, but enough remains to be done to keep an army of graduate students and scholars busy for a long time. We have much to learn by going back to the League of Nations.

[94] Drummond (later Lord Perth) played a modest role as a Liberal Party elder statesman in the British House of Lords, but Joseph Avenol passed an embittered retirement trying to rescue his tarnished reputation while Lester contentedly returned to trout fishing and obscurity in Ireland.

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