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INDHOLDSFORTEGNELSE

FORORD

Dette nummer af *Culture and History* er et temanummer, udvalgt og redigeret af lektor Haakon A. Ikonomou og hans studerende.

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God fornøjelse med læsningen!

Peter Edelberg, Niels Jul Nielsen, Lea Brinkgaard

Saxo-instituttet

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NEW APPROACHES TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Global, Digital, Institutional, Biographical

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History

ABSTRACT: This brief introduction aims to situate this special issue's contributions within the broader historiographical shifts in the scholarship on the League of Nations. Particularly, it highlights how global, digital, institutional and biographical approaches have helped reveal the sheer scale and complexity of the League's role in interwar world ordering. The second aim of the introduction is to shed light on the work process leading up to this special issue: it involved several research-based courses, an integrated digital history project, and tailored seminars to turn exams into articles.

KEYWORDS: League of Nations, global history, digital history, biography, research-based teaching

Historiographical reflections

Following the First World War, the League of Nations (1920-1946) was set up as the first standing international organization (IO) with a global scope. The aim was to foster multilateral cooperation, maintain economic stability and secure peace along the lines of the victorious powers. A deeply flawed yet innovative laboratory of global governance within a range policy fields, the League transformed the international sphere: With it, some of the basic mechanics of modern multilateral politics found their initial shape and the threshold to the 20th and 21st century – centuries of world organizations – was crossed. Despite the onset of the Second World War, the fundamental design of the League and its institutional set-up, would be adjusted and enhanced in a second generation of international organizations – the UN, EU, NATO and more – that remain with us today.

Our understanding of the League of Nations has changed drastically over the last few decades. Moving along from the idea that the outbreak of the Second World War made it, simply, a failure, it is now being reinterpreted as the training grounds of global governance in a multitude of fields (Pedersen 2007). The change was brought on by the so-called transnational turn in international history from the 1990s onwards. While scholarship on the League of Nations in the postwar years to the 1980s predominantly wanted to understand *why it failed,* the new wave of research sought to understand *how it functioned and what it did.* In the 2000s and 2010s, this shift in perspective brought under the historians' gaze the full range of the League's activities, and particularly the landscape beyond traditional 'high politics' – health, economy and finance, intellectual cooperation, international law, social questions, transit etc. – in order to explore the policy shaping powers that lay in the networks of expertise and interests that clustered in Geneva (Mazower 2012; Borowy 2009; Laqua (ed.) 2011; Clavin 2013; Sluga 2013; Kott & Droux (eds.) 2013; Pedersen 2015; Sluga & Clavin (eds.) 2017; Maul 2019; Rodogno 2021). The League is today recognized as a nodal point where the exertion of power was moulded into bureaucratic, technical, and legal procedures of world ordering (Wheatley 2019; Mulder 2022; Herren & Okuda (eds.) 2014; Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomou & Kahlert (eds.) 2020).

Indeed, this research builds on and feeds into a much more nuanced understanding of the interwar period itself. Long gone are the rigid debates of one or two world wars. First, the First World War, and particularly its violent aftermath, but also the onset of the Second World War, is now studied as experienced very differently depending on geography (among other things). Much of the Balkans (particularly Greece) and the Ottoman Empire/Turkey were at various stages of war from 1912 to 1923 (Gerwarth & Manela 2015; Abbenhuis & Tames 2021; Winters 2023). China's already perforated sovereignty was violated with the Manchurian Crisis and subsequent Japanese invasion from 1931 onwards. The former German colonies and Ottoman territories were incorporated into the League's internationalized colonial governance structure – the Mandates System. They would endure systematic oppression, militarized violence and complete lack of self-determination throughout the interwar period. Recent literature has reaffirmed and centred the League's role in an imperial world order, with Britain and France at its centre, which shaped the UN's creation fundamentally as well (Cf. Anghie 2005; Amrith 2006; Mazower 2009; Pedersen 2015; Bandeira & Monteiro 2017; Smith 2018; Jackson & O'Malley (eds.) 2018; Martin 2022). Second, with the works of historian Zara Steiner, and many others, the 'euro-centric' interwar period has equally been nuanced. It has been divided into a postwar era of careful reconstruction and experimental cooperation, followed by the *hinge years* when economic depression, political crisis, and autocratic challengers broke down the order built up around the League of Nations. This was followed by a 'pre-war' period from 1933 onwards (Hitler's ascent to power being the turning point) (Steiner 2007, 2013; Tooze 2014; Cohrs 2022, Tournès 2022). In short, global and imperial perspectives and international history that moves beyond methodological nationalism, have brought out new facets of the years of the League's existence.

Nuancing such macro- or meso- perspectives have been a surge in research on individuals or groups of people *acting in* the international sphere created and sustained by the League of Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the multiple professional associations and (transnational) political movements of the interwar era, civil society and state administrations.[1] What has emerged is a new appreciation of the complex, multidirectional and oft-frustrated agency of international actors. Studying

1 On the broader historiography on *internationalisms:* Iriye 1997; Iriye 2004; Davies 2007; Schot & Lagendijk 2008; Laqua 2011; Clavin 2012; Mazower 2012; Sluga 2013; Kaiser & Schot 2014; Pedersen 2015; Rosenboim 2017; Imlay 2018; Kott & Patel (eds.) 2018; Thakur 2021; Wagner 2022.

internationalism and multilateral cooperation 'from below', historians Jessica Reinisch and David Brydan note, means appreciating the "ubiquity and heterogeneity of internationalist endeavours" and paying "close attention to how people have been 'doing internationalism'" (Brydan & Rheinisch (eds.) 2021, 7). Such approaches are useful vehicles to challenge, transcend and connect the neat categorizations that can dominate studies on a larger scale (Almagor et. al. 2023).

The transnational studies of international actors have been complemented with research on the lasting institutional frameworks within and between which these women and men acted. Several scholars have focussed on the structuring potential of the League of Nations, and particularly its Secretariat as an institution, with specific bureaucratic norms and procedures.[2] The League Secretariat was an institution that combined diplomatic, technocratic, and bureaucratic modalities in distinct and lasting ways and the officials working there were exerting institutionalized forms of power. The interplay of structure, norms and agency is apparent in the many important contributions focussing on women employees of the League Secretariat. These studies are particularly sensitive towards the systemic discrimination inherent in the League Secretariat, despite its lofty ambitions, but also the many unrecognized, informal or disputed forms of power and influence women had in the engine room of the League (Piguet 2019, 2021; McCarthy 2014*;* Herren 2015; Sluga 2017).

The structured agency of League employees and other international actors of the interwar period has increasingly been investigated by combining biographical approaches (individual lives, collective biographies, and prosopography, social network analyses) with broader analytical scales using digital approaches. Madeleine Herren pioneered this approach with regards to the League of Nations and other international organizations, placing the "boundary-spanners" of international relations at the centre of her analysis of global ordering in the 19th and 20th century (Herren 2009; Herren & Löhr (eds.) 2013; Herren (ed.) 2014). She also headed the important digital history project LONSEA, which created a search engine – based on primary sources and handbooks – to explore networks of internationalists, international officials and international and non-governmental organizations in the interwar period

2 For this particular wave of research: Auberer 2016; Tollardo 2016; Gram-Skjoldager & Ikonomou 2019AB; Ikonomou & Gram-Skjoldager (eds.) 2019; Ikonomou 2021; Kahlert 2019; Cloet 2019; Moraes 2019; Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomou, Kahlert (eds.) 2020; Tyler 2021; Seidenfaden 2022; Mumby 2022. Within historical IR, cf.: Reinalda 2009, 2011, 2013, 2019, 2020.

(Herren, Sibille & Meigen (eds.) 2010–2016). Over the last several years, this trend has been followed up by several social network analyses (SNA) of League of Nations, focussing primarily on the various transnational (business, imperial, philanthropic, educational, ideological, expertise, epistemic etc.) networks that the IO was embedded in, or exploring the broader patterns of the make-up of the organization (Cf. Grandjean 2018).

Emanating from these historiographical and methodological developments is a new understanding of the role played by the League of Nations in bringing about a fundamental transformation of the international sphere: that is, how *the way* multilateral politics were conducted found a lasting institutionalized shape. The repercussions of this have been felt – for better or worse – across the globe and into the present day.

A note on the process

This special issue is the end-result of a source-based course, *The League of Nations: international organization, international politics and internationalism, 1850s-1950s*, offered at the Saxo Institute in spring 2022. In this course the students explored five themes: (1) The emergence of internationalisms in the 19th century; (2) The devastating and transformative impact of the First World War; (3) The Paris Peace Conference and its lasting effects on 20th-century international relations; (4) The organization of the League of Nations and the role it played in interwar politics and technical cooperation; and (5) The legacies and lessons learned from the League into postwar international politics and organization. As seen from the above, the point was neither to recapitulate a narrative of failure, nor to shy away from the many darker sides of the League, as an instrument of Euro-centric civilizational stratification and imperial governance, but to centre on its functions and practices. With offset in the newly digitized archives of the League of Nations, held at the United Nations in Geneva, the central methodological and empirical questions of the course was: *What is* the role of individuals, their experiences and competences, their social backgrounds and networks, their practices and desires, in shaping global politics?

The course was selected for a special programme in research-based teaching experiments, which gave us the opportunity to bring in a unique element, namely social network analysis. To this end, parts of the course was co-taught with Data Specialist Obaida Hanteer, Southern Campus Datalab, and supported by Xiaoyu Shi (DIKU, MA Student) and Jonas Tilsted (Saxo, BA Student). The network analysis aimed to trace the career trajectories, professional backgrounds, nationalities and genders of the permanent staff

of the League of Nations Secretariat as it mapped on to its various branches and sections. The network analysis builts on two sets of prosopographical data (standardized biographical information): The already-mentioned LONSEA database, created a decade ago at Heidelberg University, consisting of key biographical information (name, age, gender, nationality) as well as contractual information (position, rank, start of contract and end of contract) of all employees of the League Secretariat (and many more). And, secondly, the newly generated dataset from the so-called LONTAD-project (the United Nations Library & Archives Geneva's digitalization of all 15,000,000 pages of the League of Nations Archives). The added value of the LONTAD prosopographical dataset is that it contains information about educational and professional backgrounds of League staff, and to some extent career trajectories after their contracts ended. The students learnt how to visualize networks in *Gephi,* which is an open-source software dedicated to network visualization. The network-based analysis could be part of the written exam papers, though this was no requirement.

The course was also an integrated part of the project *Visualizing the League of Nations Secretariat* (*VisuaLeague*). VisuaLeague is a digital research tool where users can (1) select, combine and search on nationality, gender, institutional entity, division and position within any given time span of the League Secretariat's existence freely, (2) visualize statistical representations of one's choices and (3) browse and download prosopographical data curated by oneself. The preparatory work of the team of instructors and scholars – Obaida, Xiaoyu, Jonas and myself – together with the visualizations, findings, questions, ideas and trouble-shooting of the students, played an instrumental part in its development. In the fall of 2022, Jonas Tilsted completed an internship at the UN Library & Archives Geneva, while Yuan Chen (DIKU, MA Student) became a central part of the project. This allowed us to work systematically – with data cleaning, coding and layout – towards the project's completion in February 2023. VisuaLeague is freely available and can be accessed here: https://visualeague-researchtool.com/.

Meanwhile, in the fall of 2022, I convened two seminars, with eight students motivated to develop their exam papers from the spring course into a special issue for Culture & History. The first seminar was devoted to re-writing the introduction and premise of the paper, laying out structure of the eventual journal article. The second seminar had the format of a workshop, where the students presented reworked, first-draft articles, and received comments and questions from experts in the field. We thank Karin van

Leeuwen (Maastricht University), Laura Almagor (University of Utrecht), Michael Jonas (Helmut-Schmidt-Universität Hamburg), Vera Fritz (University of Copenhagen) and Emil Seidenfaden (University of Copenhagen) for their insightful interventions. The contributions to this special issue have thus taken colour from many scholars across disciplines, several different work processes (lectures, digital experiments, writing workshops etc.) and an ongoing research project with multiple institutional partners. Exploring the range of the digitized League of Nations Archives, Hav P. Leu, Nils Holm, Malika Shaakerimova, Jonas Tilsted, Cecilie Plambeck-Grotum, Rasmus Andersson, Jacob Nedergaard and Sebastian Vang Jensen pursue genuinely new approaches to the League of Nations and international cooperation more broadly – from global, digital, institutional and biographical perspectives. Together, they bring home the sheer scale and complexity of the League of Nations attempt at ordering the world.

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“PROFOUNDLY COSMOPOLITAN OF HEART AND SPIRIT”?

Germans in the League of Nations Information Section

The League’s Berlin office was located at Hedemannstraße 21. Source: League of Nations Archive, Geneva, “Item OB22 - No Index Card”.

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History and Social Science

ABSTRACT: Germany was a member of the League of Nations from 1926 to 1933. During that time, there were Germans employed at the Secretariat, and its Information Section, which had the greatest German presence, opened a small office to represent the League in Berlin. The League was founded on liberal internationalist ideals and its Covenant included a revolutionary article that opened all positions up to men and women equally. A biographical study of three German individuals associated with the Section and office reveals that ideological commitment to the League was not a given among all German

employees, and gives insight into the interplay of gender, class and national – or international – identity. It also shows how the realities of who was employed in the Secretariat, and why, often hinged – despite the League's ideological basis and the Covenant's promise – on pragmatic and political considerations.

KEYWORDS: League of Nations, Information Section, Berlin office, biography, gender, history from below

Introduction

> If an event like Germany's entry into the League could only reach maturity after so long a period of germination, that is perhaps a special guarantee of its permanence and fruitful results. [New York Times, 1926]

These were the words of Gustav Stresemann, German minister of foreign affairs and main force behind Weimar's turn towards reconciliation, when Germany joined the League of Nations on September 10, 1926. His hopeful words would not hold true – despite the spirit of Locarno that was in the air and the hopes it engendered, Germany would leave the League under Hitler just seven years later, one of the lights of internationalism failing and flickering off. And the relationship between the Weimar Republic and the League was consistently ambivalent, marked by the long shadow cast by the Versailles treaty, which the Germans hoped to revise by virtue of their membership (Steiner 2007: 458, 635-636; Pedersen 2007: 1092-1094).

Nonetheless, during those seven years of membership, there were Germans working for and with the League at all levels. This article takes a closer look at three of these people, using their biography as a prism to learn about a time that historian Zara Steiner has termed the "hinge years", during which a succession of crises determined the fate of the following decade (Steiner 2007: 635). What were their personal convictions and reasons for seeking work with the organisation, and what do those tell us about League-Weimar relations? What do we learn about the realities of work inside the League Secretariat?

A closer look at Germans in the League shows the greatest presence within the Information Section, which was tasked with informing the public about the League's work – a section that also opened a satellite office in Berlin. The main methodological tool of this article is biography. I will first investigate the biographies of two employees of the Berlin office: Jost Terhaar, who ran it from 1928 to 1933, and Charlotte Cunitz, his clerical assistant who started alongside him and stayed until 1934 to close up shop. They are especially germane to focus on given that they lived and worked on the intersection between national and international interests. The third biographical case that will be discussed is Paulette Weber, a cosmopolitan inhabitant of Geneva who worked only for the League during two temporary appointments but saw herself as destined to be part of the organisation.

The League's employment policy was revolutionary in its explicit standard of parity: Article 7 of the League Covenant states that "all positions under or in connection with the League, including the Secretariat, shall be open equally to men and women" (United Nations Office). This, however, didn't translate into reality. By taking a closer look at two of the many women who worked as lower-level clerks and stenographers for the League, I take an approach "from below" that enables new insights into the constraints of gender and class (Piguet 2019: 19, 52; Caine 2010: 70).

Comparing our three protagonists reveals that despite the League's foundation in liberal internationalism, neither Terhaar nor Cunitz were documented to have had a particular ideological commitment to the League. Moreover, both Cunitz and Weber represent a heightened mobility of women but were still limited in their career advancement. Their difference in identity and class (Cunitz was the daughter of a secretary, while Weber came from a highly mobile and well-connected family), however, leads to a contrast in how they approached their own marginalisation.

The main source base of the article consists of the Secretariat's personnel files. I also include minutes of the appointment and sub-appointment committee, as well as files on the Berlin office, all kept in the League of Nation Archive in Geneva (LONA). I likewise use the online digital research tool "Visualizing the League" which can be found at https://visualeague-researchtool.com (Ikonomou et.al. 2023).

Methodology and theory

Biography constitutes the central method of this paper. It uses the individual as a prism to reveal the structures in which a person lived and how they could or couldn't influence those structures (Tuchman 1979: 134; Eriksen 1996: 163). A German working for the League was necessarily part of its political sphere and social world, but also embedded in cultural, political, social, religious, and familial contexts in Germany (Nasaw 2009: 574). German members of the Information Section were by the very nature of their work – keeping contacts with the German press and knowledge elites and tasked with informing "the public" about the League – placed at the intersection of Geneva and Weimar (Seidenfaden 2019: 227). They were part of a public in which the topic of the League was fiercely and continuously debated (Wintzer 2006: 120). Using more than one person as "litmus tests", moreover, of the historical world in which they lived enables me to see parallels, synchronicities and contrasts between them that would otherwise stay hidden (Caine 2010: 47). Biographical method offers, too, many alternatives to the "cradle-to-grave" study of grand actors (Almagor et. al. 2022: 2, 4). Paying attention rather to lower-rank employees, actors constrained by their class position and gender, gives valuable new insights about the concrete ways those categories shape a life (Caine 2010: 122-123).

I will make use of the "Visualizing the League of Nations" online digital research tool that illustrates the League Secretariat across several categories, based on prosopographical data (Ikonomou et. al. 2023). The prosopographical method – tracing a group of people via standardised biographical data points – reveals, regarding the League Secretariat, patterns, networks and changes of the institution, and its interplay with the outside world.

Situating the Berlin office

An inquiry into German individuals involved with the Information Section and the Berlin office calls for contextualization across different fronts. The following will thus provide an overview on the League's ideology, Germany-League relations, Germans working in the Secretariat, as well as about its female employees, and, lastly, the institutional framework of the Information Section.

First of all, it is important to take a look at how the liberal internationalist ideology that shaped the ideas of Woodrow Wilson, intellectual father of the League, translated into reality within the institutional world of the League Secretariat. Historians Karen Gram-Skjoldager and Haakon Ikonomou have discussed whether the Secretariat could be understood as an autonomous liberal internationalist actor in itself (Gram-Skjoldager and Ikonomou 2021: 32). They show, via three case studies of the Secretary-General, the Disarmament Section, and the Health section, that the Secretariat painted a much more ideologically diverse picture and had room for conservative and technocratic internationalisms (Ibid.: 40, 44, 48, 50). Despite the League's founding values and the various liberal internationalist actors using it as a platform, it is also important to remember that the League's dependency on member state support shaped the inside of the League apparatus and various sections' scope of action to their core. This can also be seen in the way state interests shaped staffing decisions and how, while staff were expected to hold loyalty to the League only, "every (higher) member of the Secretariat was considered a contact point of his/her respective government" (Gram-Skjoldager and Ikonomou 2019: 262, 273). The strategic inclusion of national interests in appointments meant that the Secretariat could gain legitimacy and thus diplomatic authority (Ibid.: 273).

The "game" of appointment also played a role in regards to Germany joining the League (Kahlert 2020: 60). In the words of German historian Michael Jonas, the attitude of Weimar Germany towards the League was "ambivalent, at worst hostile, at best pragmatic, and rarely visionary" (Jonas 2020: 164). In post-war Germany, the brand-new League was inextricably linked to a peace treaty most Germans perceived as a humiliation (Wintzer 2006: 210). With Germany excluded from membership, relations between the League and Weimar after the war were tense. Only Stresemann's reconciliatory politics led to the signing of the Locarno treaties in 1925 and German admission into the League the year after. A succession of crises and conflicts, compounded by Stresemann's death in 1929, led to a more confrontational German course towards the League, and the country withdrew under Hitler the year of his election (Kimmich 1976: 190). Jonas, who has investigated the biographies of a number of German nationals working for the League Secretariat and the German Foreign Office's (Auswärtiges Amt, henceforth AA) League personnel politics, comes to the

conclusion that while the relationship especially between the top-level diplomats dispatched to Geneva and the League was certainly uneasy, the German presence in the League was not driven by clear-cut hostility (Jonas 2020: 160). Lastly, organisations in support of the League and liberal internationalism could also be found in Germany (Wintzer 2006: 121f).

The Information Section was tasked with informing the public about, and legitimising, the League's work. As historian Emil Seidenfaden has shown, the Information Section's conceptualisation of the League always included nation states and their interests. Given the Secretariat's role as representing its member states, it adhered to a dogma of neutrality (Seidenfaden 2019: 228f, 253). His work shows, again, how the liberal internationalism that brought the League into being did not and could not translate into an openly liberal internationalist ideology permeating every level of the organization or indeed its official communications, as the political boundaries of the member states could not be overstepped (Ibid.: 126). Lastly, the public the section addressed was for the greatest part implicitly understood as educated elites that already harboured some sympathies towards the League (Ibid.: 86). This can also be seen in the Berlin office's work, which represented one of in all seven global offices that were tasked with disseminating information about the League and building and maintaining local contacts with Geneva (Ibid.: 227).

The Covenant's promise of employment equality, a result of feminist lobbying, was something altogether new (Kahlert 2020: 61). Women in the Secretariat were, still, employed in lower positions most of the time and in those sections whose purview was considered traditionally feminine, and were passed over for promotions or replaced by men when their positions grew in importance (Piguet 2021: 59f). Nevertheless, combined with the new professional avenues provided by shorthand-typing and stenography, Geneva was likewise a hotbed of professional opportunities for young, unmarried, and highly mobile women (Auberer 2022: 227f). Last, there were many ideological overlaps between feminism and internationalism, represented at the organisational level by, for example, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Sluga 2017: 64).

The German presence in the League Secretariat

In 1926-1934, 34 German 1st division employees could be found in the Leadership and Functional Sections[1]. An investigation with the "Visualizing the League" tool into the German presence in the Secretariat across institutional entities and across the whole of the League's existence shows that there were Germans working across a wide variety of sections, and that they were present just as much in the administrative departments where 2nd division staff worked, such as the duplicating and multigraph service and the pool of stenographers (almost all female German employees can be found here)[2].

Significant here is the prominence of the Information Section, which represents the strongest German presence across time by far, followed by the Berlin office. The Berlin office was a branch under the Information Section but does not overlap in the prosopographical dataset since the Berlin office and the Information Section are here treated as two separate institutional entities. These numbers include, however, temporary collaborators, which were members of national elites invited for the most part during the annual Assembly to observe the League's workings (Seidenfaden 2019: 84f). Given the fact that this system "[underscored] the section's character as 'at the point of contact' with the outside world", they provide relevant insight into the Section's work in Germany (Ibid.: 84). German temporary collaborators invited included such diverse people as Ermentrude Bäcker von Ranke, grandchild of Leopold von Ranke and the first female habilitated historian in Germany (in 1928; Kieler Gelehrtenverzeichnis, n.d.), and Giselher Wirsing, leader of the National Socialist "Tatkreis" (in 1932). His recruitment to go to Geneva was described by Jost Terhaar, head of the Berlin office, as a success and part of a larger "extraordinarily difficult", but moderately fruitful, process of establishing ties with Nazi youth (LONA, file R5381-18A-6909-1743, 1932). Secretary-General Eric Drummond comments positively on Terhaar's report: he has "noted with special interest the indications which this report contains on the value of the temporary collaborators system", indicating the hopes in the League apparatus that, despite the fractures with both Germany

[1] The number was 55 for the UK, 48 for France, and 33 for Italy (Ikonomou et. al. 2023).
[2] See Piguet, 2021, p. 56, for a visualisation of the three-division system.

apparent at this point, the mechanism of the Information Section's publicity work leading to growing sympathy with its work had hope of fruition (LONA, file R5381-18A-6909-1743, note by Drummond, 1932). Both von Ranke and Wirsing illuminate different aspect of the strategies the Information Section employed towards "the public" (primarily conceptualised as intellectual elites and those already favourable towards the League, Seidenfaden 2019: 86). There were spaces specially reserved amongst the temporary collaborators for women, which might possibly have led to von Ranke's invitation (Ibid.: 86). The invitation of Wirsing, meanwhile, can be seen as an example of the Section inviting League sceptics in hopes of ameliorating their view on the League (Ibid.; more on this later).

The head of the Berlin office: Jost Terhaar[3]

Jost Terhaar, our first protagonist, commenced his appointment as Head of the Berlin office on the 15th of August 1928 following a discussion in the Appointments Committee in June; the committee's protocol contains a comment by German under-secretary Dufour on "the difficulties of finding the right man" (LONA, file S956-265-1). Among these difficulties seemed to be both the various requirements for such a post and a salary judged low considering the cost of living in Berlin. Terhaar was recommended to Max Beer, freshly appointed A member of the Information Section, by a, so Beer, "very renowned Catholic personality in Germany": priest Friedrich Muckermann, editor of a Catholic literary journal, who judged him to be "from what I could gain from correspondence with him, honestly enthused by the ideas with which he would have to work". Muckermann was himself a member of the League of Nations Union and added that the League was a "quite nice idea" that, however, needed "a stronger effort" put in to "survive against the adverse conditions and […] become a common good of our people."

Beer recommended Terhaar to Drummond, mentioning that he himself had known Terhaar for a long time, valuing his "serious character and journalistic qualities", and that he possessed "what appears to me essential for the post in Berlin -, [sic] a quite great idealism and youthful belief in the League of Nations". Beer saw several advantages to choosing Terhaar: he had been a correspondent

[3] Everything not otherwise cited is taken from Terhaar's personnel file, LONA, file S892-197-3455.

for several newspapers, some belonging to the Catholic Centre Party and industrial ones, in Geneva and was thus familiar with the League's work; his appointment would satisfy both journalists in Geneva and German political milieus; and they avoided what he saw with apprehension in some other candidates, namely "the temptation to want to play too personal a role, to take on too diplomatic a demeanour and to exaggerate the importance of his functions". Pierre Comert, director of the Information Section, recommended announcing the appointment before the new German Reichstag was constituted to pre-empt the strong parties of the new parliament calling for another candidate, given Terhaar's Centre Party affiliation. The appointment was approved by Drummond and the German Chancellor of the Republic. Terhaar was at the point of his appointment twenty-seven, the son of a merchant from Westphalia, and held a doctorate in Political Science. After working both at a sociological institute and as a lawyer at an industrial association, he had started working as a journalist in 1924.

In November 1933, Terhaar handed in his resignation to Drummond's successor Joseph Avenol with the wish to be let go as quickly as possibly because he had been offered a position as Vice Director of the political-economical section of the IG Farbenindustrie in Frankfurt; he was granted this request. His personnel file contains documents dated 1947 after the League of Nations ceased to exist, when Terhaar wrote to Beer's successor in the Information Section, the Austrian Ranshofen-Wertheimer, who was now employed at the United Nations, asking for the copy of the letter he was sent by Avenol upon his resignation. Ranshofen-Wertheimer, significantly, adds a paragraph stressing that "no question of employment or application for employment is involved in this matter" and asks, confidentially, for information on Terhaar's whereabouts since his resignation, showing the delicacy of the postwar situation. The Geneva personnel office who answered could not supply any further information.

Sources on Terhaar after 1933 are indeed scant. His name does, however, appear in protocols of the IG Farben case, one of the Subsequent Nuremberg trials for war crimes held before US military courts in Germany, on several letters and documents (the company had, among other things, manufactured the gas used to murder those imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps; US printing office 1949: 12, 98, 106ff, 178ff, 224, 262f, 273, 310). A search in the Political Archive of the AA in Berlin (PA)

identifies him, furthermore, as a member of the SA, a paramilitary organisation of the NSDAP (PA, file R 9361-III/569646)[4].

Terhaar's appointment was influenced, as shown, by a number of factors: he represented a candidate that appeared to possess the "formation 'genevoise'", as Beer called it, and was accepted and later appreciated by German political and journalistic circles. At the same time, his appointment was influenced firstly by the fact that he accepted a salary that otherwise, so Beer wrote, "only attracted insufficient candidates" (up until the point when he wrote to Comert in mid-1930, in the wake of the financial crisis, asking for a raise in urgent terms, having had to move in with his parents-in-law, which he was granted). Secondly, he was judged not to overstep the bounds of his position, important, too, because of the responsibilities he bore with only remote supervision from Geneva. Of Terhaar's work, we know that it was well-received in Geneva and the annual reports on him from 1930-1933 were positive. Comert, in 1931, emphasised his work establishing connections with economic organisations and the Office's "daily and growing contact with all branches of the political and technical press in Germany". Despite the increasingly volatile relationship between Germany and the League, the Office established a multiplicity of contacts. Even taking Terhaar's own judgement in his report that "[the Office] is doing a work for publicity in Germany which is described as necessary and indispensable by the German daily press, specialist organs, economic organisations and other branches of public life, and also Government offices" with a grain of salt, given a threat of reorganisation on the horizon, the large amount of communication with various individuals and organisations in the external fond sources does offer an indication that the Office managed to carve out a small spot for itself (LONA, file R5381-18A-6909-1743).

The clerical assistant of the Berlin office: Charlotte Cunitz[5]

Charlotte Cunitz was hired before Terhaar, in February 1928, and stayed on until the final liquidation of the Berlin Office in March 1934; between November 13th, 1928, and May 31th, 1930, she was transferred to Geneva. She was born in 1893 in Zoppot near Danzig, where her

[4] Lack of access to the PA's physical files means that I am limited to gleaning information from the metadata available through the Federal Archive's online search engine.
[5] Everything not otherwise cited is taken from Cunitz's personnel file, LONA, file S750-55-876.

father worked as secretary for the worker's compensation board and chamber of commerce, and after finishing school, she learned dactylography and stenography "in private circles". After working some time in her father's office, she was employed in different firms in Germany as secretary and steno-dactylographe before working, from 1918 to 1925, for the German embassy in Bern. Returning to Berlin, she became secretary for a chemical factory - "she is resigning an interesting position in order to accept our vacancy", Comert noted. Like Terhaar, she was recommended by Max Beer, who she temporarily assisted in Geneva in November 1928, which had met opposition from Howard Riggins Huston, Chief of Internal Services. He saw it as setting a dangerous precedent given Cunitz's limited knowledge of languages other than German and thus inability to work as a typist in English and French, which was otherwise demanded of shorthand typists. Comert wrote to Drummond that finding someone different was, "extremely difficult, despite appearances, Germans that know foreign languages have become very rare the last few years", which can possibly be understood as a comment on building tensions with Weimar. Cunitz did go to Geneva, but found "great difficulty in acclimatizing herself", so Comert noted in 1929, where he judged her to be "somewhat run down at the moment, owing largely to overwork". Cunitz's untiring work also in Berlin is well-documented; Comert in 1932 tried to effect a wage raise for her and Office assistant Manteuffel, due to the amount of overtime they put in, which was shot down by the Sub-Appointment committee with the argument that in the current economic situation, they were privileged to have a job at all (LONA, file S962-271-1). The nature of her secretarial work makes it harder to trace what her precise tasks in the Office were, but with only three employees working there at any one time, she was without a doubt indispensable to its function and work processes.

On the liquidation of the office, she contacted Comert's successor, Adrianus Pelt, inquiring into the possibility of leaving earlier in case she found a new position. Her letter bore hints of desperation that clearly reflect the economic difficulties and lack of opportunities in the wake of the Great Depression. Pelt mentioned Cunitz's worries to Jost Terhaar - "[…] it concerns me from a moral point of view." Terhaar seemed to have helped her; there is a personnel file under her name in the records of the IG Farbenindustrie, where she appears to have worked from 1934-1947 (PA, file R 8128/26258). Searching the PA also reveals her as a member of the NSDAP (PA, file R 9361-I/476).

Continued disappointment: the case of Paulette Weber[6]

Paulette Weber, who was engaged in the League on a temporary basis for three weeks as replacement secretary to Beer when Cunitz was ill, is chosen as a third case even though she wasn't involved directly with the Berlin office, and also worked in the Disarmament section for her second stint with the League. The reason for this is her singularly ideological motivation for seeking work with the League, which presents a contrast to Terhaar and Cunitz. Weber contacted the League for the first time in 1921, opening with "if it at first moment appears audacious of a young woman of German origin to address herself to the League of Nations and to offer it her services [...] I hope to overcome your antipathies and hesitations". She argued for her internationalism and cosmopolitanism, emphasised her political interest, and praised the League's efforts to establish peace after the horrors of war. Her father used to be a Protestant priest in Geneva, and she was educated partly there and partly in Berlin. She had travelled a lot in Europe, not only to learn languages but also to gain understanding of other peoples' "customs and characters [...] to make myself deeply cosmopolitan of heart and spirit". She recounted that during the war, her father was never duped by the "inept games" of the German government and defended his opinion against even his closest friends, leading the family to spend the war years in Geneva. She ended the letter by listing a whole paragraph of names, friends of her father's, that included a hotel director and a reverend. In early 1926, her next letter came with a recommendation from the head of the Belgian ambassador in Budapest to Drummond, and in late 1926, she wrote again to Drummond recounting her language skills and the university studies she had undertaken in the meanwhile. After failing to secure a post, she continued contacting the Secretariat, asking for vacancies, and is invited to an official test in stenography. At that point, however, she had surpassed the age limit of 35 and expressed her regrets, stating that the hotel work she was currently pursuing does not satisfy her intellectually or on a humanitarian level since she had grown up in an "erudite household" and spent the last year preparing for a position at the Secretariat. Later, after her two engagements at the Secretariat, she applied for a spot at the disarmament conference, again devoting some space to describing her international ideology, connecting it to Christian virtues. "I dreamed about a League of Nations", she wrote, "before it was created"; her exclusion from the Secretariat as a polyglot she

[6] Everything not otherwise cited is taken from Weber's personnel file, LONA, file S904-209-3717.

described as "almost strange" considering the number of employees who speak less languages than her. She was, however, not employed by the League again, and I was unable to find sources on her later whereabouts.

Ideology, gender, class

In the following, I will discuss the different ideological approaches to the League that are revealed by our three protagonists, and in Terhaar's case, the way this shaped his work in the Berlin office. Thereafter, I will use gender and class as parameters of comparison. Here the biographical approach reveals its strength, as the prism of the individual reflects certain structures in significantly different ways, interacting with the many unique aspects of the life in question.

To start with Terhaar, we know that his background spanned law, political science, industry, journalism, and academia, and that he was affiliated with the Centre Party. This indubitably shaped both which contacts he brought with him to the Berlin office, which connections he forged and the ease with which he established them. Both his outreach to the Nazi youth movement, actions during the war and lack of sources in which he personally speaks out on the Geneva spirit attributed to him attest to a political elasticity that must have helped him navigate the German political, organisational, economic, and public landscapes. The Information Section "dogma of neutrality" and the Branch Offices' instruction to follow their own country's foreign policy are visible in the office's work and did not seem to constitute a problem for Terhaar or the office in general. Historian Tomoko Akami has convincingly shown that the Tokyo office of the League, which existed until 1939, was unable to reach the ordinary public due to, in the first place, its focus on technical and expert knowledge; the Berlin office had the same focus and can thus be suspected of having had the same problem (Akami 2018: 82ff). The extent of this, and the way it would compare with Tokyo, unfortunately, lies beyond the scope and source base of this article. In the second place, Akami argues, the broader public could not be reached because the conceptions of publicity that the League's information work was based on were based on liberalism and thus unable to accommodate alternative discourses, such as communism (Ibid.: 77). What tensions would have revealed themselves had the Berlin office existed past the date of Germany leaving the League are pure speculation, but of course, Nazi ideology was just as incompatible with the liberal internationalism

the League was ultimately founded on, so that Terhaar's attempts, supported by Drummond at reaching out to its various movements the year before the election of Hitler and Germany's exit from the League, following the logic that knowledge about the League leads to support of it, can, looking back, only be categorised as a doomed endeavour. Still, his actions reflect the fact that an existential basis in liberal internationalism did not mean that alternative ideologies were shunned by the Secretariat's actors. This is most extremely represented by Drummond's successor Joseph Avenol, whose support for the Axis powers shaped his plans for the future of the League, placing him within a fascist internationalism (Moraes 2018).

Taking a look at Cunitz paints a similar picture: her NDSAP membership likewise illustrates how working for the League, even for an office that had the goal of spreading sympathy for its project, did not mean a liberal and internationalist persuasion that would have kept her from joining a Nazi organ. It is very possible that, for her and Terhaar, it was simply a job that ensured their livelihood. Their trajectory also reflect the fragility of all League-Weimar understanding; the rise and victory of fascism made Germany's exit not only a foreign policy decision that had unfortunate consequences on a personal level, but a decisive break that led to them returning to a purely German context and quickly positioned them on the opposing side of their former colleagues.

A significant difference between Cunitz and Terhaar, however, is of course gender and class, and the limits these imposed on Cunitz. In general, she was a hard and skilled worker who frequently worked overtime; her references by past employers are exceptional, and the annual reports on her work note the vast number of tasks she took on, such as informing the press and developing the review copy service, and "her remarkable capability for work". She was responsible for the Berlin Office when Terhaar was away, where she showed, according to Comert, that she "can work independently and on her own initiative". The German ambassador in Bern found that her qualities "qualify her exceptionally to a leading position in her profession". One can read a note of surprise into some of these comments. Cunitz did not have a documented affiliation to women's organisations or even a documented internationalist persuasion, but her biography still reflects a heightened mobility of young unmarried women at the time that was still new; she travelled in Germany and left Danzig for Berlin, and Berlin again for Bern, in her twenties. The vast array of

tasks that she took on in previous positions, in Berlin and in Bern, and her apparent talents might have qualified her for a wide variety of work. Her position thus reflects a Secretariat where women were overrepresented in stenography and secretarial duties but not higher positions, and sometimes took on more tasks than they were officially being paid for (Ikonomou 2022). This reflects general society at the time; Cunitz was constrained by gender power relations that opened up certain careers, also as a tool for international mobility, and closed off others. These power structures applied to Weber as well; the great difference to Cunitz is that she expressed her awareness of them, locating the reason for her lack of education in structural discrimination faced by women and mentioned her father's opposition to female emancipation, which had kept her from gaining any academic titles. She also represents, compared to Cunitz and Terhaar, the ideological outlier who supports the League project wholeheartedly and with great eloquence.

Charlotte Cunitz was the daughter of a secretary and had certainly been afforded education, but class differences nonetheless become very apparent in comparing her to Weber. Weber's strategies of employing letters of recommendations and names of local elites known to her family are direct consequences of her class position and the life-long mobility it had led to, and her comment on the "strangeness of being excluded" from the League speaks to a sense of entitlement. She moreover openly addressed the fact that an application by a German citizen only three years after the war could be met with a negative reaction and utilised her father's lack of support for Germany during the War in her favour. Her education in both Berlin and Geneva, extensive travels, and residence outside Germany, then, enabled her to lay claim on an identity beyond the bounds of a national German one. She already saw herself as an cosmopolitan individual, something Cunitz first obtained via her employment and could lose in times of economic crisis. In Paula Weber, the interactions of class, internationalism, and mobility become visible. The fact that despite her ideological commitment, she was not employed by the League, shows again how the pragmatic aspects of staffing (such as an age limit) trumped the League's idealistic foundations.

Conclusion

The Information Section was without a doubt the section with the largest German presence, even taking the temporary collaborator system into consideration. Its task was to inform the public about the League's work. Working for its Berlin office was thus intimately connected to representing the League towards a German public; as the cases of Jost Terhaar and Charlotte Cunitz have shown, however, this did not mean a pronounced ideological commitment to it, and the latter did not secure Paulette Weber an employment by its own merit. Terhaar's appointment, moreover, which in contrast to those of Cunitz and Weber was of interest in German political circles, can be seen as a consequence of several factors, not least his political centrism and assumed lack of overreach. The three individuals thus illustrate how the pragmatic realities of who was employed by the League could be far from the lofty idealism it was founded on, both high positions debated on the Appointment Committee, like Terhaar's, as well as concerning lower positions. Similarly, the careers of Cunitz and Weber illustrate the structural constraints on female workers at the time that the nominal promise of employment equality at the Secretariat did not cancel out. Cunitz and Weber, both constrained by which careers were possible for women at the time, had both led a border-crossing life; the emphasis by Weber on her ideological commitment, meanwhile, and the lack of any such in Cunitz, are striking and can be explained by Weber's background in an intellectual, highly mobile family. The focus of the Berlin office's work on technical and press elites, finally, can be seen both in light of general trends in how the Information Section worked but bears also the imprint of Terhaar's own background and contacts.

The intimate study of the individual, it must be said, limits any ability to generalise on these results; using, with Eriksen, another person - another litmus test - might have revealed different things (Eriksen 1996: 117). Still, this biographical study contributes precisely with insights into what was possible for these individuals and what wasn't, where boundaries they faced lay and where they failed and succeeded in their efforts in the precarious context of the Hinge Years.

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A SCHEME FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The League of Nation's Attempt at Maintaining World Peace

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ABSTRACT: This article studies how the League of Nations sought to create an international security framework of financial assistance from 1925 to 1930. By analyzing the internal files of the League of Nation's archives, it provides an inside-out institutional analysis of the League's Economic and Financial Organization and shows how key League and non-League actors with idealistic notions of the Convention's 'swiftness' and 'sureness' bridged concerns of legal legitimacy. While earlier writing on the League has focused on the failure of its peacekeeping ambition, this article shows how it was pursued and argues that the Convention was conceived in a nexus of optimistic, liberal, and technocratic ideas of the global market's deterrence potential.

KEYWORDS: League of Nations, financial assistance, international economic relations, international security, interwar period

Introduction

On 24 February 2022 Russia invaded Ukraine, escalating the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian War and seriously threatening global security. While the invasion is a matter of life, death, and sovereignty for Ukraine, for the world the invasion challenged institutions such as NATO, the UN, and the EU on the question of how to intervene in conflicts and manage global security.

Harsh sanctions were imposed to cripple the Russian economy and limit the opportunity for continuing warfare. Meanwhile Ukraine found itself in serious financing troubles (IMF 2022). While Russia was excluded from markets, financial assistance was granted through donations and loans under favorable terms to the Ukrainian government.

This way of managing global security through economic intervention has since the second world war been a popular solution, not least through the UN in which the Security Council can "take action to maintain or restore international peace" (UN 1945). Sanctions and financial assistance are however not an invention by the post-WW2 international organizations. To trace their history and understand the development of economic intervention as a style of global security governance, we must look at the precursor of the UN: the League of Nations.

The League of Nations was the first worldwide intergovernmental organization, set up after the first world war with the goal of maintaining world peace through international cooperation. Together with its ambition of disarmament, its core security strategy lay in the sanctions framework written into the Covenant's article 16 (League of Nations 1919). In this article, I distinguish between sanctions and financial assistance and concentrate on the latter. This is because the two were conceived and institutionalized separately in the League of Nations and imagined to play complimentary but separate roles. It is the aim of this article to write an inside-out history of financial assistance as it was developed, calibrated, and eventually accepted as the Convention on Financial Assistance by the Assembly in 1930, focusing on the drafting process of the League of Nations' secretariat. In the League Covenant art. 16(3), a plan for a financial assistance scheme was set up. How it was to be executed was however not elaborated. This question was left unaddressed

until 1926, when the Finnish delegation brought up the question at the Preparatory Commission for the Disarmament Conference (R265-8-51945-51679). Following this impulse, the League secretariat worked to formulate an effective plan for financial assistance, and the finalized convention was adopted at the 11th Assembly in September 1930.

This article works inside-out the League of Nations and studies the section files of the Economic and Financial Organization (EFO) of the League which had the task of drafting the Convention on Financial Assistance. The EFO consisted of the Economic and Financial section which was a part of the League secretariat and staffed by league officials, and the Economic and Financial Committees which consisted of outside experts providing technical assistance.[1] The article provides an institutional history of the EFO and shows the key ideas of the Convention on Financial Assistance through an analysis of the draft process in the EFO.

This approach is influenced by the shift in the historiography on the League of Nations crystalized in historian Susan Pedersen's directive article suggesting that researchers of the League of Nations must look past the narratives of failure that colored 20th century history writing on the League and instead ask the more historically sensible question of what the League did and meant throughout its lifetime (Pedersen 2007). This sparked a renewed interest and approach to writing history on the League of Nations, within which this article is placed. Notably, the economic work at the EFO that played a large part in the League's endeavors in the 1920's and has previously been characterized as the "greatest failed organization of the League" (Armstrong 1982: 27), has been shown to contribute with valuable experience on how to intervene in and manage international questions, to the point where the League's undertaking in economics formed the basis of its role in international relations (Clavin 2013: 1). But while the technocratic solutions on for example reconstruction loans and international cooperation on monetary policy has received scholarly attention,[2] the politically entangled subject of sanctions has seen less.

[1] For a thorough explanation see: Clavin & Wessel 2005.
[2] See for example: Zendejas & Decorzant 2016; Martin 2022; Clavin 2013.

The historiography on sanctions in the League of Nations exactly follows Pedersen's characterization of the 20th century history writing on the League. Unable to look past the looming shadow of Italian and German aggression, the historiography on sanctions has worked with an implicit notion that they failed to secure peace in the world of the 1930s, and instead of looking at what was done to pursue a stable global security system based on market exclusion, analyzes the hypothetical realm of what could have been done differently to make the sanctions effective.[3] Although this is an important and interesting endeavor when developing new sanctions policies, for historians the history of sanctions must look beyond their effectiveness. That the Convention on Financial Assistance failed to prevent war is evident. But it is not the object of this study to investigate how the League failed to secure global peace but instead what it did to pursue it. And in the process of studying this, develop our understanding of how the League worked.

This method of analysis is a continuation of the recently published *The Economic Weapon* by historian Nicholas Mulder, who has written the history of how sanctions developed from World War 1 and was institutionalized, legitimized, and applied in the interwar period (Mulder 2022). In a similar manner as Pedersen, Mulder stresses the need for historians to analyze the *effect* of sanctions instead of their *efficacy,* as earlier studies have been inclined to. Mulder's account of the history of sanctions is thorough and wide, and while he covers how the question of financial assistance was treated politically, intellectually, and to some degree within the League, this article focuses much more narrowly on the history of financial assistance as it developed in the EFO and shows how key individuals worked to bridge national concerns from the major powers and create a scheme for financial assistance that was applicable before an act of war. This adds to the existing literature an underexposed aspect of the institutional history of financial assistance in the League of Nations and provides a new League-centered narrative that shows the importance of League officials not covered by Mulder, by anchoring the analysis in the EFO and drawing on archival material not previously used.

This archival material is the section files of the EFO, containing the working files and office papers of the section with everything from correspondences and drafts to confidential papers and records

[3] See for example: Strang 2008; Baer 1973.

of conversations.[4] Being the internal documents of the section, the discussions and articulations on the financial scheme are less tainted by political or strategic concerns, allowing for an analysis of the day-to-day work of the EFO. Combined with a biographical approach that can link and contextualize the individual to the institutional and cultural contemporary reality, it is the promise of this article to attempt to surpass a structural view of how things *should work* and instead show how they *did work* (Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomou & Kahlert 2020: 35).

Through the archives of the League of Nations, this article investigates the League secretariat's key ideas of the Convention's swift and sure nature and how they legitimized decisions when questions on international law arose, before showing how member of the Financial Committee Sir Henry James Strakosch provides a biographical key to understand how the League interacted with outside actors.

The convention on financial assistance

The Convention on Financial Assistance of 1930 was to aid a country, either the victim of war or of the threat of war. This was done by a loan scheme in which money was raised in global financial markets and guaranteed by the convention's signatories. The EFO had developed this model of financing during the Austrian reconstruction, in which the Financial Committee who co-drafted the Convention on Financial Assistance had also been involved (Mulder 2022: 161).

The signatories of the convention would each guarantee a tranche of a potential loan. To provide extra security financially strong member states, i.e., the European major powers, would act as 'special guarantor' (CRID-49-246-1: 15). This way, the borrowing state could strengthen its credit by associating with stronger states and the loan was triple guaranteed: first by the victim state, secondly by the guarantors of the convention, and ultimately by the special guarantors.

The convention had two built in mechanisms for going into effect. First, it was a condition that the total amount of tranches guaranteed by the signatories should amount to at least 50 million gold francs to ensure a scale sufficiently big enough to guarantee the convention's efficiency (Art.32).

[4] All archival materials are referenced with their original reference code and accessed at the UN Geneva archives website.

Second, by demand of the British the convention would only go into effect following a plan for the reduction of armaments (Art.35), imagined to be negotiated at the World Disarmament Conference 1932 (S119-69-9: 32-38). This was to be the ultimate flaw of the convention and the reason why it never went into effect.

The idea behind

The preamble of the finished convention accurately describes the purpose "as a means of safeguarding, or if necessary, restoring peace between nations" (S581-11-7-2: 30). The overall goal was to establish a system of financial assistance that could quickly intervene when global security was threatened and as will be developed in the following, the entire drafting process was guided by the ideas of the convention's *swiftness* and *sureness,* that for the League constituted the convention's efficacy.

In a note, member of the EFS and secretary to the director of the EFS James Arthur Salter, Arthur Elliot Felkin outlines how the convention was an attempt to combine articles 16 and 11 of the League of Nations Covenant. Article 16 authorized the League to impose sanctions after an act of war had occurred, while article 11 declared that any war or threat of war was a matter of concern to the whole League that could take any action that was deemed necessary. Combining the two articles and institutionalizing it in a financial assistance scheme allowed the League to initiate its main peacekeeping strategy of sanctions and financial assistance before an actual war occurred, thereby gaining valuable tempo in its effort to intervene in and manage global peace (S119-69-8: 74).

Felkin describes three advantages that define the effectiveness of the scheme. Firstly, the scheme would give the Council a powerful tool to deter aggressors and intervene in international conflict. The power to grant financial assistance was placed in the Council, which was seen by Felkin and the League secretariat as a clear advantage as it secured the swiftness of the assistance that was necessary to effectively intervene in international conflict. Placing the power here also had the symbolic effect of showing determination and homogeneity within the Council as well as being a way to pick sides without officially having to determine an aggressor. The last point was repeated at a Directors Meeting, a periodical meeting for the Secretary General and all the Directors of

functional sections in the League Secretariat, in 1930 where director of the Disarmament Section Thanassis Aghnides pointed out that from a political point of view, acknowledging the victim of a conflict indirectly designated the aggressor, elegantly solving the politically sensitive issue of picking sides (M279 5).

Secondly, Felkin imagined the scheme to give each member state a sense of security as they would be reassured of receiving assistance when threatened. This was an important point, as the effectiveness of the convention was largely based on the confidence in the scheme's sureness.

Lastly, Felkin describes how this sense of security would have a spillover effect on the surrounding League efforts for disarmament. Felkin imagined that this confidence would convince states to reduce their armaments, knowing that assistance would be swift and plentiful in a time of crisis. Summarizing the above points, Felkin captures the nature of the scheme as follows:

> Thus, the whole idea of a scheme for collective financial assistance to a potential victim arose as a practical contribution to the problems of strengthening the hands [sic] of the Council in times of crisis, increasing the sense of security of each country, and therefore furthering disarmament (S119-69-8: 74)

As Felkin emphasizes, the effectivity of the convention lay in its swiftness and sureness, meaning that the council could intervene before a conflict escalated. This was because member states by signing the convention had already agreed to support the potential victim regardless of who it was.

In a pamphlet titled *A Financial Plan for the Prevention of War*, Sir Henry Strakosch, who as a member of the Financial Committee worked as a technical advisor to the League on the convention (Clavin & Wessel 2005: 472), touched upon the same point when describing the machinery of the convention functioning "almost automatically" (S119-69-8: 32). Strakosch is the only one to describe the convention as automatic, or almost automatic, which is understandable from a strategic point of view when considering that member states typically were not inclined to guarantee anything before knowing the concrete case. But when reading how the swiftness and sureness of the assistance was described by the League, it is clear that the imagined effectiveness of the convention depended on its automaticity.

This was noticed by the American Clarence Kirschman Streit who worked as a journalist at the League in Geneva. He described the League's understanding of the convention's nature this way: "The convention is considered ideal as a first step towards safeguarding peace because it involves so little political and financial risk to the individual League member" (S72-22-10: 64). Although it is not entirely clear whether the League imagined the convention to be politically riskless, Streit's analysis of the League's position is accurate, as the convention was considered less political than blockade and sanctions under article 16 of the covenant, which could much more easily be perceived as an act of war (S72-22-10: 79).

Streit was an avid Atlanticist (Streit 1939), and his enthusiastic account was an attempt to sway the American public and political elite towards the convention. The League had intentionally left a door open in the convention for non-members to join, potentially making the financial assistance much more powerful. Article 23 stated that non-members could participate "in guaranteeing the annual service of a particular loan" (S581-11-7-2: 36). This door and the elasticity for non-members to participate on a case-to-case basis was phrased intentionally to invite the USA to participate (S72-22-10: 24). Thus, the key ideas of swiftness and sureness constituted the stability of the convention's effectiveness, while the elasticity regarding non-members held a potential to globalize, or at least Americanize, the convention's application. This open door mimicked a similar attempt to bring in the Americans by accommodating the Covenant to the Kellogg-Briand pact (Mulder 2022: 164-169) and displays the inherent problem of the League of Nations' attempts to create a global security system, where the commitment of the world's economic and military superpower, the USA, was essential.

The League thus had a very optimistic view of the effectiveness of the convention. Following Mulder's description of the interwar period's regard of the Economic Weapon's devastating effects and the "blockadephobia" that followed (Mulder 2022: II), it is better understood why "[t]he combination of financial assistance to the one party in a conflict and the closing of financial markets to the other" (S72-22-9: 9) was regarded as such a powerful tool, steeped in technocratic internationalistic ideas of how the integration of global markets provided a system of managing global security.

This resulted in the confidence that just the existence of the convention and its quasi-automatic nature separately from any other art. 16 sanction scheme would prove enough to deter would-be aggressors from provoking conflict, here formulated by Felkin:

> At an expense which at its maximum is both limited and exactly known, it offers an opportunity of demonstrating to the aggressor, in a form which he cannot possibly mistake, the united determination of the Council. In the great majority of cases, this demonstration would probably be sufficient and would come into play so promptly that the loan itself would never need to be raised. (S72-22-10: 80)

The hurdles of the convention

Throughout the drafting process, the League secretariat faced several problems that challenged the eventual convention's realization. These problems were legalistic in nature and concerned the legal legitimacy of the convention, specifically the question of where the executive power should be placed, and the question of intervening before an armed conflict occurred thereby separating the convention from the Covenant's art. 16, which ended up as art. 1 and 2 of the finished convention. These concerns of international law exemplify the difficulties the League faced in their attempts to establish global security systems, but also how new precedents and practices in international law were formed. By following the process, new perspectives on how the League secretariat functioned is brought up, and it is shown how the League secretariat navigated these questions from an ideological standpoint where the ideas of swiftness and sureness guided their response, sometimes even overruling legal advice.

Who holds the power?

The problem of legal legitimacy and where to place the executive power was immediately raised following the first draft of the convention. International lawyer and legal adviser to the British delegation on the reparation commission Sir John Fischer Williams (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography 2008), initiated his 9-page commentary on the first draft of the convention in August 1928 by discussing the legal aspect as well as the potential political backlash of placing the power of granting financial assistance with the Council.

He enthusiastically stated that the convention would "probably give rise to some nice points of law" before dwelling into the problem of legitimacy: "It seems to me wrong in principle to give the final

power of deciding such points to a political or diplomatic body in the shape of the Council" (S119-69-8: 134-135). Williams was of the conviction that law and politics should be strictly separated, and suggested instead The Permanent Court of International Justice (PCIJ) or a similar legal organ as the executive body of the convention. He sums up the dichotomy:

> The interpretation of documents in the light of legal principle […] is essentially a legal job; to hand it over to politicians and diplomatic persons is to confuse the spheres of politics and diplomacy on the one hand and law on the other (S119-69-8: 135).

The League secretariat left the question open until December 30th 1929, when then member and later head of the Legal Section Hugh Mckinnon Wood wrote an extensive note on the legal questions of the Convention on Financial Assistance (R2970-10E-16831-6838). The note discussed the question of reference of disputes to the PCIJ and identified two perspectives of difficulties: One concerning the jurisdiction of the PCIJ and one on the application of the convention.

The question of jurisdiction came from the proposal that there should be a "non-suspensive right of appeal to the Court for all questions of interpretation" (Ibid.: 11). Baked into this proposal was the same question of legal legitimacy that Williams raised, but McKinnon Wood quickly dismissed it. Firstly through a legal argument in which he stated that it was outside the jurisdiction of the Court to settle such a case of interpretation, and secondly through an argument of the needed swift and sure nature of the convention following the argument developed in the above section on the ideas behind the convention.

The jurisdiction of the Court was between states or members of the League (League of Nations 1920: art. 34). According to McKinnon Wood it would therefore be outside the power of the Court to settle a case between the Council and a state, as was proposed. His argument however continued outside the lines of law and jurisdiction, covering the effectiveness and very nature of the convention.

When evaluating the PCIJ's role McKinnon Wood wrote: "The scheme would lose nearly all its value if delays were possible before a loan was authorised" (R2970-10E-16831-6838: 14). Here he raised the point that if the Court was to scrutinize the decision of the Council, it would mean a *de*

facto delay of the assistance since it was based on a loan scheme of market confidence coming from the backstopping of the convention's guarantors (Ibid.: 14-15). With both a practical and a legal argument, McKinnon Wood kept with the rhetoric of the convention's nature when concluding: "It is, therefore, inconsistent with the nature of the scheme that the Council's decision to authorise a loan under particular guarantees should not finally settle all the questions of interpretation of the Convention" (Ibid.: 14).

Shortly after, McKinnon Wood's note was picked up by the EFS, and member of section Jan Van Waltré de Bordes commented on it on the 14th and 15th of January 1930. On the 14th, de Bordes wrote to Salter that he had prepared a draft for the Financial Committee to discuss, based largely on the note from McKinnon Wood. Here he questioned the Committee's competence in discussing legal considerations, a point the Committee previously had stated itself (S119-69-8: 110). The question of legal legitimacy was then to be decided within the League secretariat, and de Bordes wrote a note to McKinnon Wood on potential solutions. He suggested that the Council should be able to give a provisional decision, stating that "[t]he procedure of going to the Court may be awkward if a decision is urgently needed" (S119-69-9: 74). The guiding principle was in this case still the swiftness of the scheme. The sureness was, as McKinnon Wood stated, however still equally relevant.

To solve the problem of securing the scheme's effectiveness while still maintaining legal legitimacy, McKinnon Wood proposed an alternative article 25 of the convention (R2970-10E-16831-6838: 3). This allowed for Governments to submit an appeal to the PCIJ, although the decisions of the Council were to be final, regardless of the Court's opinion. This alternative would secure that the Council still had the opportunity to act quickly while at the same time opening for a legal body to guide future interpretation of the convention.

In the finalized convention the provision regarding interpretation is contained in Article 27. It states: "Any dispute as to the interpretation or as to the method of application of the present Convention shall be settled by a decision of the Council of the League of Nations" (S581-11-7-2: 36). I have not been able to find any more archival material elaborating why the decision to place the power of interpretation and application with the Council was made, but following the

considerations of the League secretariat, it can be argued that exactly the idea of the convention's swift and sure nature ultimately tipped the scales. It also shows how the dichotomy between international law and politics that Williams advocated for, was overlooked by the League secretariat that placed not only the executive power in the Council but also the power to scrutinize and interpret legal documents, i.e., the text of the convention.

Intervening before an act of war

For the League and the EFO, intervening before an act of war were the teeth of the convention. Going back to Felkin's account of the convention, it was from the beginning considered to be the convention's strength that it could be applied before an actual war occurred, i.e., that it could be separated from an Article 16 sanctions scheme. This is also evidenced in the very first draft drawn up by de Bordes, in which the separation from Article 16 was essential: "the scheme should be applicable both under Article 11 and Article 16 of the Covenant" (S119-69-8: 221). This was however politically and legally difficult, because financial assistance and sanctions were considered as a weapon and even called 'The economic weapon' (Mulder 2022), which meant that granting financial assistance could be perceived of as initiating or escalating a conflict. In the finished version, art. 1 enabled the Council to grant financial assistance to a victim state where an aggressor has violated its international obligations and resorted to war. Art. 2 however, allowed the Council to grant financial assistance "in any international dispute likely to lead to a rupture" (S119-69-8: 30). The League thus succeeded in giving the convention its teeth, but the road to this finalized art. 1 and 2, was long and demanding especially for director of the EFS Arthur Salter.

In 1930, ever closer to the Assembly that in September was to adopt the scheme, the major powers of the League objected to the EFO's proposed art. 1 and 2, and the League secretariat led by Salter had to be a broker between different national political concerns.

In a conversation between Directors Arthur Salter and Eric Colban in August 1929, Salter mentioned that the Finnish foreign minister, Hjalmar Procopé, had told him that the French objected to the phrase *menace du guerre* (S119-69-9: 105). During the 5th meeting of the Third Committee of the Assembly, 16th September 1929, the question of "threat of war" under article 2 fell into three positions: the British, the French, and the German/Italian (Ibid.: 82).

The British position formulated by Lord Cecil was sympathetic to a solution in which the Council could accord financial assistance if the other party of the dispute refused to comply with the directions laid out by the Council.

The Italian/German proposal was much more in line with the early League optimism of how just the threat of financial assistance was enough to deter potential aggressors, proposing that the Council should notify the two parties of the conflict "that if one of them goes to war the Council will grant financial assistance to the other" (Ibid.: 83). The effect of the German/Italian proposal would be that financial assistance would only be enforceable under an Article 16 sanctions scheme, which aligns with Mulder's account of how Germany had entered the League with a clear desire to keep the tool of sanctions weak (Mulder 2022: 161).

The French position delivered in a speech by head of the League department at the Quai d'Orsay René Massigli lay between the two, suggesting that the Council should only be able to award financial assistance if the two parties had already carried out measures recommended by the Council to prevent hostilities, and subsequently one of the parties had broken off negotiations. This would mean that financial assistance could only be given in a case where there had previously been negotiations, opening the opportunity for an aggressor to ultimately ignore any international intervention until a war broke out.

The League now faced the problem that the convention's setup with special guarantors being signatories of the convention and members of the Council, would benefit from and depended on having permanent council members Britain, France, and Italy on board. It was also doubtful that the convention would gain the needed signatories to fulfill the 50 million gold francs mark required for the convention going into effect, without the support of the major powers (S119-69-10: 81). In that sense, the sureness of the convention depended on bridging these positions.

The EFO were still adamant that the nature and purpose of the Convention was to be a tool of intervention that could be applied before an actual war. In a letter to Procopé, Salter stressed that to take out the words "threat of war" would be "largely to destroy the character apart from the value of the plan" (S119-69-9: 105).

Most important for the League was to bridge the differences between the French and British propositions, which Salter set out to do together with Finland's foreign minister Procopé, Finnish representative at the League Rudolf Holsti, and previously mentioned René Massigli. Here they found a phrasing that the Council could act "dans la limite des droits resultant pour lui soit du Pacte soit de Conventions, générales ou particulières, applicables en l'espèce" that suited the French, and which Salter estimated would suit both the Financial Committee and the British (Ibid.: 61). After sending it by Lord Robert Cecil on the 4th of April (Ibid.: 41), Salter could finally tell Secretary-General Drummond that the Council had confirmed British support, which gave him the confidence to write: "I think we ought to make a great effort to press it through this year" (Ibid.: 38). The convention was pressed through and following an exchange of letters with Hans Frohwein of the German Auswärtiges Amt (S119-69-10: 85, 81, 72 & 60), Germany eventually signed the Convention in November 1930, a month after the Convention was accepted at the 11th Assembly and only after the other major powers had signed it.

Although political pressure was exerted upon the League to differ from the initial intentions of the nature of the covenant, the League secretariat, notably through the commitment of Salter, persisted in keeping the text of the convention true to the ideas of swiftness and sureness. They also managed to keep the convention separated from Article 16, ensuring that the convention could be applied before the outbreak of war.

After the signing of the convention, Salter wrote to Procopé that he would have rather seen a postponement of the vote on the convention than Article 2 being deleted, indicating how much Salter worked to negotiate a convention that aligned with EFO ideals. This letter also shows how Procopé and Salter had a similar worldview, indicated by Salter's wording that he and Procopé worked "for the same object" (ibid.: 45), which throughout the process of solving the problem regarding Articles 1 and 2 proved helpful by providing a room for the exchange of ideas between likeminded.

Mobilizing support

In the following section, I will be focusing on the role of member of the Financial Committee Henry Strakosch and show how his unique background and position in global politics, were harnessed by

the League to mobilize public support in the UK. Strakosch provides a particularly illuminating prism because his role in the Convention on Financial Assistance extends beyond his professional advice in the committee, not least due to his enthusiasm for the scheme, showing how the private actor as a part of "The Greater League" (Davies 2012: 410) could reinforce League policy and work in between the League and the public.

Mr (later Sir) Henry Edouard Strakosch (1871-1943) has a staggering resume within international finance. Born in Austria, Strakosch started his career in the Anglo-Austrian Bank where he was transferred to the London branch. He left for South Africa in 1895 to enter the mining business, a country and subject he would be connected to for the rest of his life through his position as managing director and later chairman of the South African mining and financing house A. Goerz & Co., later renamed Union Corporation (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography 2004).

Managing the company from London, Strakosch developed strong relationships with the elite of the London finance world such as Governor of the Bank of England Montagu Norman, who also had strong ties to Salter and personally meddled in League economic policy (Martin 2022: 63-99), and John Maynard Keynes. After the first world war, Strakosch branched into politics playing a key role in monetary policy in South Africa and as a representative of South Africa at the League (Bordiss & Padayachee 2011). Simultaneously, he began his intellectual venture into monetary policy (Strakosch 1918), and became chairman of *The Economist* in 1929, a position he kept until his death.

In League context, he sat as head of the Financial Committee 1920-21, and as a member until 1937. The Financial Committee was an 'unpolitical' committee of experts that assisted the EFS with technical expertise. But as Clavin and Wessel has shown, the Financial Committee and EFS with Salter as the key figure, were in close collaboration to the point where "the border between 'technical' and 'political' issues was an indistinct one" (Clavin & Wessel 2005: 466). During his time, Strakosch assisted with the reconstruction loans of Austria, Hungary, Danzig, Estonia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Portugal, besides the question of currency and of course the Convention on Financial Assistance.

The first point of interaction between Strakosch's dual role as League employee and Greater League enthusiast came from the League (Davies 2012: 410). Knowing that the convention eventually had to be pushed through national parliaments, the League faced the challenge of mobilizing support, meaning that they had to start framing the convention's superiority in the world press. In March 1929 this project was initiated, and in a letter to Strakosch de Bordes wrote the wishes of the EFS: "What is necessary is that, before the Assembly, public opinion should express clearly the desirability of the scheme being adopted" (S119-69-8: 102).

Interacting with the public was a core strategy of the League, that looked for national public support to influence states' decisions on League matters (Seidenfaden 2022). In swaying the public opinion, the League was not oblivious to the fact that they had a person of excellent qualities in Strakosch. Both as the chairman of *the Economist*, but particularly also as a public debater on financial and economic issues, Strakosch had the rhetorical qualities and professional ethos to be a driver in the debate on financial assistance.

Furthermore, mobilizing support from the public presented a difficult issue for League personnel. The League could publish rapports and issue news statements, but when it came to the less official and increasingly political side of policy, they were bound by their status as international civil servants. This fact was recognized within the League, here phrased by de Bordes:

> The article should preferably not be prepared by the Secretariat, partly because we are too much handicapped by official terms of expression, and partly because the Secretariat has always to express itself with a certain reserve, and thus cannot write freely (S119-69-8: 102).

De Bordes followed up by concluding that an article on the convention on financial assistance should instead be written by "an outside source", which follows Seidenfaden's characterization of how the League secretariat were afraid of being accused of being propagandists (Seidenfaden 2022: 372). Strakosch was then in a privileged position as he was both an integral part of the drafting process on the convention, while simultaneously being an outside source with the opportunity to speak freely.

Following de Bordes' request, Strakosch immediately jumped on board and quickly showed his competencies by developing a press strategy that was more sophisticated and sensitive to the political and demographic context in England, than the initial impulse provided by de Bordes. De Bordes had imagined that Strakosch could use his position at *the Economist* to further the cause of financial assistance, but Strakosch suggested that the readers of *the Economist* were not the right target group, as they did "not require much persuasion on this particular subject" (S119-69-8: 101). Instead, Strakosch imagined that an article in a daily paper such as the Times would be better to enlighten a larger public. His insights on British politics also proved helpful, as he suggested the League delay a push in the press until the General Election was over, making sure that the financial assistance wouldn't get drowned (Ibid.: 100). Throughout this, Strakosch used his network in London to talk over ideas (Ibid.: 100), and eventually also pulled the strings that enabled articles to be published.

De Bordes' request suggests that the League had initially not envisaged Strakosch to be the author of any articles. He wrote in a letter to Strakosch that "[t]he writing of such an article will doubtless take a certain amount of time and I wonder whether you could not stimulate somebody to set himself to the task." (Ibid.: 99).

Instead of finding somebody else, Strakosch himself wrote the article that the League requested, and made sure that it was printed in the Times (S119-69-8: 52). For this he was the perfect match, as his views on the scheme corresponded with the League's because of his work in the Financial Committee, which was also noted by Salter: "It is excellent and just what is wanted" (Ibid.: 66). Strakosch went on to mobilize even more of the British press (Ibid.: 63), as well as writing a more thorough pamphlet on the convention (Ibid.: 27). Besides mobilizing public opinion through the press and advocating the scheme to diplomats with the pamphlet, Strakosch also brought the issue to the elite London circles when he gave an address of the convention at the Chatham House, an organization set up after the first world war dedicated to promoting knowledge on international affairs (Strakosch 1931).

This was not only because Strakosch was a "Superior Practical Man", as Bordiss and Padayachee describe him (Bordiss and Padayachee 2011), but because Strakosch ideologically saw eye to eye with the League on the issue of financial assistance. This is clearest in the way Strakosch was

personally invested in the project, going beyond just practical solutions. For Strakosch, the question of financial assistance was more than just a convention falling under his advisory responsibilities within the Financial Committee, it was an issue on which he was passionate.

This passion is among other things seen in a handwritten note to Salter, following the convention's success at the Assembly in September 1930. Here Strakosch uses a style of phrasing that is very indicative of not only the amount of labor that went into the convention but indeed also the emotion that he attached to the project: "It was nice of you to have thought of me when the Financial Assistance baby was safely delivered" (S119-69-10: 47). It might be objected that Strakosch was merely being humorous or speaking in a private tone, but the phrase is very different from the earlier correspondence between Strakosch and Salter, or any other League employee. Instead, I interpret this natal rhetoric as an indication of the emotions that fueled Strakosch's commitment to the convention.

Placing Strakosch within the institutional history of the League, we see how he as an "outsider" constituted a valuable link to the non-Genevan world. Unlike League personnel who were bound by their role as international civil servants, Strakosch could shift roles and work as an intermediary, while his intimate knowledge of the League's opinion on financial assistance made the transition of knowledge much smoother.

In this story, Strakosch was not just a cardboard figure to be filled out by anyone. His unique capabilities, excellent network, and personal sympathies provided the ideal setup to mobilize opinion and advocate for the convention. Strakosch made sure to pull all the strings he could to secure a safe delivery for his "baby".

Testing the convention

Ultimately, the coming into effect of the convention was bound up on the successfulness of the World Disarmament Conference 1932-34. As is shown by a discussion at a Directors Meeting in 1929, this was not to the liking of the League secretariat (M255: 70), but it was a necessary evil to secure British support. Although the automaticity provided in the convention died with the disarmament conference, the idea of financial assistance did not.

Following Italy's invasion in 1935, the League declared Italy the aggressor and initiated imposing sanctions under Article 16 10th October 1935. Compared to the considerations on Articles 1 and 2 in the Convention on Financial Assistance, the case of Ethiopia suggested itself to be much easier, as a sanctions scheme was already underway. But when financial assistance left the safe theoretical realm of law and entered the real world of conflict, the political implications proved to be much harder.

Already at the end of the 1920s, Felkin had suggested that aggressors would test League determination and unity by challenging the convention (S72-22-10: 79). Italy was exactly such an aggressor, having tested the limits of the League during the Corfu incident and being a major power as well as a Council member. That this put the convention under serious political pressure, is painfully clear as the Ethiopian plea for financial assistance was not placed under the EFO but under the Political Section (R3671-1-20692-20692). Here, Under-Secretary-General in charge of the Political Section Office Frank Walters acknowledged that the Ethiopian case exactly met the requirements of the Convention on Financial Assistance, but without the Convention, the assistance would prove too cumbersome to coordinate through League machinery (Ibid.: 4). Thus, the League's optimism for the scheme evaporated in the reality of the 1930s crises.

Conclusion

This study set out to illuminate how the League of Nations worked to draft, and push through the Assembly, the Convention on Financial Assistance. As argued, the League's conception of the convention's effectivity hinged on its rhetoric of the convention's nature (that is, its intention), emphasizing the swiftness and sureness of the application. When problems arose, these were the key nodes guiding how the League sought to overcome the difficulties.

In the case of the legal legitimacy, the League secretariat was adamant that the swift applicability of the scheme was not to be hindered by considerations of legitimacy. Instead, it argued that the Council and the trust vested in it constituted the legitimacy needed to ensure the continued backing of the member states. I have argued that ultimately it was the rhetoric of the convention's nature that tipped the scales. Keeping true to the idea of the convention, the executive power and the power

of interpretation was placed in the Council, even though alternative articles were drafted to bridge concerns of legitimacy and effectiveness.

When the League was challenged on the subject of Articles 1 and 2 of the convention, it again held on to the key ideas behind the convention. But here the stakes were much higher, as the challenges came from the major powers essential for the convention's success. Keeping the convention separate from Article 16 of the Covenant and ensuring that the Council would retain the power to intervene in conflicts were the concerns that guided League strategy. Through a diplomatic effort by Salter, the League succeeded in keeping the phrase *menace du guerre,* securing the convention's applicability outside an Article 16 sanctions scheme.

Besides phrasing the convention in a manner that suited the member states and the Legal Section, the League tried to mobilize support through a push in the press. League personnel were restricted in their ability to act because of their status as international civil servants and, as such, the dual role of Henry Strakosch proved invaluable. As a member of the Financial Committee, Strakosch's knowledge on League opinion made him the ideal advocate for the convention and his professional background and position enabled him to fully mobilize the British press and foreign affairs elite in favor of the Convention on Financial Assistance. Strakosch is equally interesting as a 'non-political' actor, who nonetheless had a great influence not only on the Convention on Financial Assistance, but also on a variety of other League projects. In the tumultuous post-WW1 economic landscape, Strakosch was exactly an architect of the new international economic system (Martin 2022: 63).

While financial assistance proved unsuccessful in the League, it has since become a preferred feature of global governance from the lend-lease program of the US Roosevelt administration in 1941 to the financial assistance in present-day Ukraine. Although not possible within the scope of this article, the ideological culture of the EFO and the continuity into the UN suggests themselves as natural successors to this study and important perspectives to further illuminate the history of financial assistance.[5]

[5] On ideology, see Mulder 2022; Slobodian 2018. On continuity, see Mazower 2013.

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FROM THE BOTTOM UP

Exploring the Rights and Agency of Central Asian Displaced Persons in the World War II Aftermath

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ABSTRACT: In this article special focus is given to the casefiles of Soviet Central Asian nationals as they relate to the Care and Maintenance program under the International Refugee Organization (IRO). While refugees are often portrayed as void of agency or remain invisible, incidentally, these minorities' voices and narratives are underrepresented in history of displacement and refugeedom too. The available records of this small group of refugees or displaced persons (DPs) are helpful in capturing their agency through exploring the ways they were navigating through the process of claiming assistance and protection in their particular circumstances.

KEYWORDS: International Refugee Organization, displaced persons, agency, Central Asia

Introduction

There is plenty of literature on the development history of international refugee protection between 1919-1951, when the first international response and early regime was developed that defined universal norms, principles, and standards for governing the modern refugee regime as well as migration/mobility in general. However, the question about how much refugees themselves were involved in producing, or engaging with, laws, policies, humanitarian responses, and actions has not been thoroughly investigated. In addition, refugees have often been portrayed as passive victims who are dependent on humanitarian assistance. In order to delve into the institutional and social aspects of (forced) human displacement management history and examine question of the agency and image of refugee, I take a closer look at a set of documents related to International Refugee Organization's (IRO) Care and Maintenance program (CM/1 forms) for refugees and displaced persons under its mandate and the screening process of a group of applicants with origins from Central Asia within USSR at that time. While studies based on the CM/1 forms archive have primarily been dedicated to the Jewish and Eastern European nationalities, the displacement experience of Central Asian peoples is a scarcely investigated subject.

At the final stage of the Second World War, governments faced the question of the fate of millions of so-called displaced persons (DPs), who were captured by the Nazis as prisoners of war or labor force from different countries on the territory of Germany and other zones of occupation. Being misfits and de facto stateless in a state-centric world, their rights were limited too. The IRO played a central role in assisting them in the path chosen – returning to the country of origin or starting a new life in a foreign country. Among these displaced persons were about half a million Soviet citizens,[1] formally grouped into one category. As for the Central Asian populations, which also participated and contributed to the Soviet war effort during World War II, it is difficult to say how many of them found themselves in this situation and did not repatriate. At the same time, the USSR did not grant Soviet citizens outside the union's territory the right to emigrate to country of their choice, to flee from potential persecution. On the contrary, the repatriation of its citizens was

[1] See Zemskov, Viktor. N. 2013: "Returnees" and "Non-returnees" (on the fate of Soviet displaced persons in 1944-1956). Proceedings of the Samara Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 15 (1-1), 103-113.

mandatory and forceful as the Soviet authorities used repressive methods in handling the refugees. In this context, some people from the Central Asian region applied for the IRO's assistance choosing the path of emigration.

The main scope of this article is to add a perspective "from below" to the literature on the international refugee regime and human displacement. In this regard, Peter Gartell's concept 'refugeedom'(Gatrell 2017), based on the idea that refugees are not simply passive victims, but rather active agents who negotiate complex legal and social systems in order to secure their safety and well-being, is helpful is to explore the agency of refugees in aftermath of World War II. In particular, I focus mainly on the Central Asian displaced persons or refugees and demonstrate how they exercised multiple forms of human agency in the process of negotiation of eligibility for receiving assistance from the IRO for resettlement. Based on the findings, I argue that displaced persons and refugees were not always passive, constantly suffering and brought down by misery as often described. They did make attempts to increase their chances for a successful outcome of the screening and engaged with institutions. Life continued even in limbo – the desire to emigrate was strong, jobs and opportunities were sought, new families were founded.

In the following sections, I will present the source material and the main concepts relevant for the findings. Before shedding some light on the Central Asian minorities in the quest of seeking protection and demanding rights, I will give a legal-political overview of refugeehood, describe the context specific to the applicants' situation and give an overview of the IRO's role in the process.

Source material and theoretical framework

The IRO's first task of registration of individual and family applications for assistance in order to determine their basic eligibility and need for aid from the organization, generated case files under the care and maintenance program for displaced persons living in occupied Germany and other countries. The information found in the Application for IRO Assistance, also referred as CM/1 forms – a five-page questionnaire – which applicants had to fill out, from 1947, in order to receive

support from IRO, is the main source material in this article (Figure 1).[2] At the end of the IRO program in 1952, some of these historical records were destroyed, the rest were transferred to the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Arolsen, Germany.[3]

I examine fifty CM/1 case files found on the applicants from Soviet Central Asian Republics, namely Tajik – 1, Uzbek – 10, Kyrgyz – 5, Kazakh – 9, Turkmen – 25.[4] This is a relatively small number of records available of these Soviet minority nationalities for the examination in the archival holdings. In addition, these numbers reflect only the number of lead applicants and does not include their families. Yet, it is important source material that offer us some insights and patterns, inconsistencies, peculiarities, and commonalities in the files. The documents can also help to bring usually overlooked actors such as the eligibility officers and refugee applicants and their families to the fore.

My analytical approach is mainly based on the historian Peter Gatrell's concept of "refugeedom" that points to the importance of exploring the agency of refugees and DPs as it's often missing in the historiography. Refugeedom is defined as a broad matrix of relations and practices that include "categorical practices, legal frameworks, bureaucratic instruments and humanitarian relief work, whilst enabling us to relate refugees' experiences, conduct and responses to those prevailing institutions and norms" (Gatrell 2017: 179). Therefore, their agency may be an important factor in understanding their experiences and the policies that affect them. The concept encourages a multidisciplinary approach bringing the parts together in order to understand the whole. Therefore,

[2] The information on the forms includes personal data, family information, movement and employment over the previous 10–12 years, education and language skills, financial resources, and future plans, reasons contra repatriation, and desired emigration country. This form was filled only after the preliminary check by *registrars*, then *eligibility officers* conducted interviews based on the CM/1 forms. We can find their notes, decisions on screenings, as well as different stamps and abbreviations. The applicants could also submit supplementary sheets on dependents, and different documents. In addition, they had a right to object and have their status re-examined. In addition, Holborn's book on the history of the IRO contains valuable statistical data related to displaced persons and the organization and structure of the Organization itself.

[3] See the General Inventory for an extensive overview of the holdings: <https://www.itsarolsen.org/en/archives/overview-of-the-archival-holdings/general-inventory/> The Allies founded the ITS in 1943 for two reasons: to trace the whereabouts of Nazi victims and at the same time to be able to reject claims too (ibid; 10). The ITS re-invented itself as the Arolsen Archives in 2019, one of the world's largest historical archives about Nazi persecution and post-World War II migration.

[4] These files can be found on https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/search by using nationality filter option.

by analyzing different dimensions of refugeedom, Gatrell argues that we can gain a more nuanced understanding of the experiences of refugees and the challenges they face.

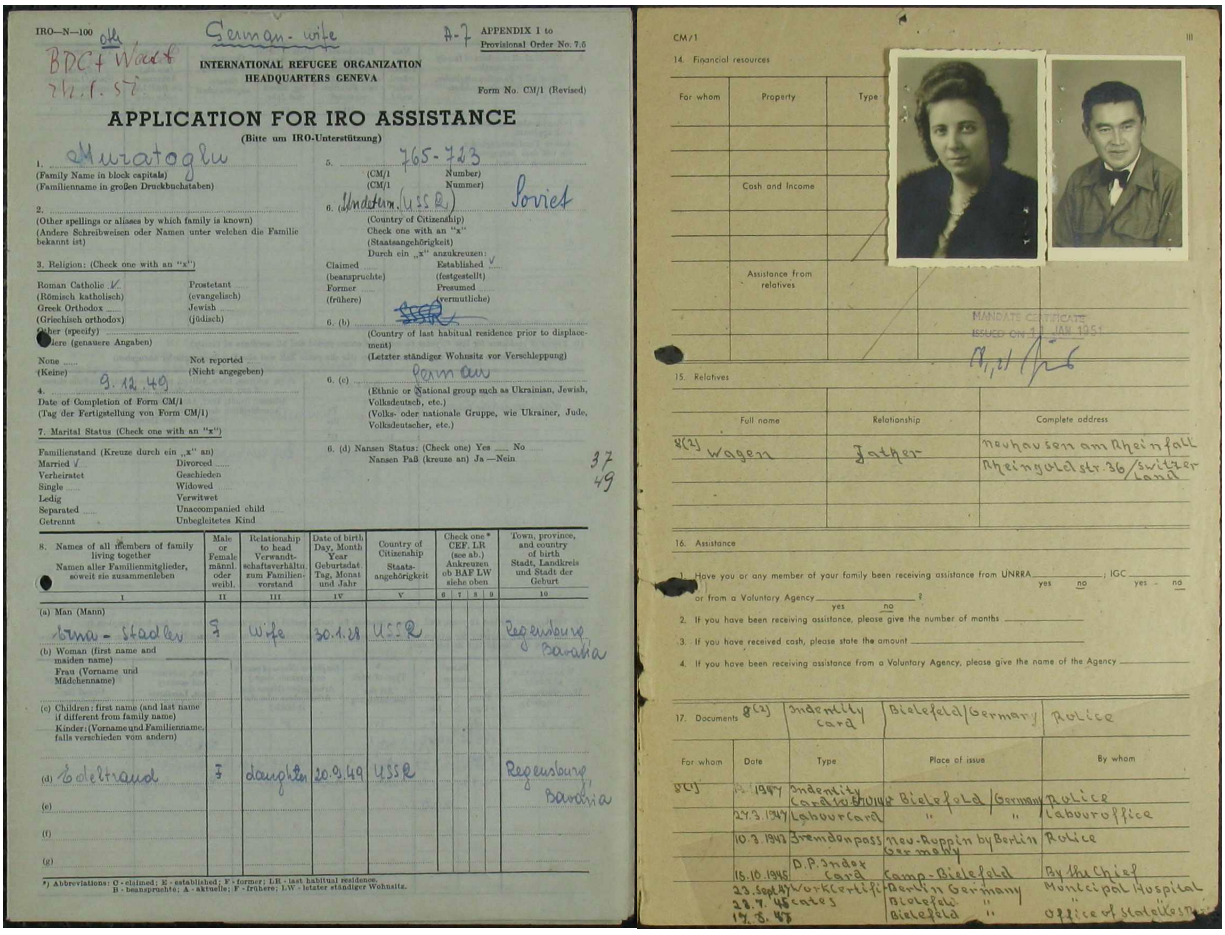
This perspective helps us to look at history from below – how people engaged with norms, rules, and what sense they made of their situation given their status. Special attention is paid to the so-called negotiation cases in the aftermath of the Second World War between IRO officers and refugees along with a broader discussion of status and rights, international refugee protection, within the years of early development of refugee regime that culminated in 1951 Refugee Convention.

It is worth noting that a broad understanding of agency is applied in this article, seen both as intentional and unintentional, and not in isolation, to be able to "think systematically about all persons involved in the IRO's care-and-maintenance project instead of focusing too exclusively on DPs and refugees" (Huhn 2021: 11). Furthermore, historian Henning Borggräfe (2020: 8) explains that "applicants' statements in DP records cannot simply be read as expressions of their identities and beliefs, or as authentic accounts on their previous lives. Rather, the CM/1 (Care and Maintenance) forms have to be understood as two unequal partners negotiating a status." The negotiation concept encourages us to focus on more than just biographical info, but also on the conduct and response of refugees to institutions and norms. It is easy to fall into the trap of the primacy of individuals and isolate them despite the point being to include them. In this light, it is also important to describe how state and international institutions interacted with stateless refugees.

Individuals living in limbo find themself in political and legal vacuum. One Russian refugee even rejected the refugee category: "we are living people [with] the misfortune to have been displaced, but we are human beings all the same. We long to become people once again" (Gatrell 2013: 50). Hannah Arendt (1962: 296–97) has also noted that "without citizenship, in the world of States, a man can be denied those human rights that are in fact tied to citizenship". Based on Arendt's ideas in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Alison Kesby (2012) observes that we live in a world where the removal of citizenship negates our rights, sense of belongingness and identity.

In this regard, it would not be wrong to interpret negotiations of eligibility as a negotiation to have rights. Undoubtedly, refugeedom is linked to human dignity, right to nationality or citizenship and

asylum, and many other rights such as freedom of movement, expression, and well-being. Since eligibility was a first step in obtaining a long-term status that enabled refugees to start anew as well as get legal and political protection, the question of refugee agency, and the image of the refugee, needs to be reimagined with the recognition of their resilience, capacities, and their critical role in shaping their own lives and of their communities.



INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATION
HEADQUARTERS GENEVA

APPLICATION FOR IRO ASSISTANCE
(Bitte um IRO-Unterstützung)

Figure 1. Personal files of MURATOGLY, JOSEF and MUBARRACK, SABIR.

Overview of early international refugee law and policy

The need for protection and the non-refoulement principle [5] were especially important developments in the World War Second aftermath, because "the insistence on individual persecution as the chief criterion for recognition represented a significant departure in legal practice,

[5] International law principle of not forcing refugees/asylum-seekers to return to a country in which they are at risk of being subjected to persecution.

and an indication that human rights were beginning to make an appearance in international law" (Metzger 2017: 116). However, even though the belief in the fundamental worth and dignity of all human life was, as Claudena Skran (1995) writes, one of the foundational grounds for a unified international response and joint efforts, the refugee crises were mistakenly thought of as a temporary, humanitarian question. What started as a humanitarian project always had economic, political social, legal implications (Skran 1995; Frank and Reinisch 2014). Likewise, refugees were framed as either a threat, a financial economic burden, aliens, or an object of pity and embodiment of suffering. This framing had a long-lasting effect as even at present "rarely are refugees perceived as agents, actors, participants, or in general subjects capable of making claims and demanding rights" (Nyers 2008: 164).

Prior to the Second World War, intergovernmental efforts within the framework of the activities of the League of Nations were focused on improving the legal status of refugees by concluding multilateral treaties for specific groups of refugees as they emerged. Gradually, an understanding began to form that a state is an oppressor and protector in one as the 1933 Convention relating to the International Status of Refugees had "an important addition about the explicit obligation of states not to expel authorized refugees, and to avoid refoulement" (Hathaway 2005: 87). Not only did a stateless status imply loss of political and legal protection, but also constituted a traumatic and disruptive experience that had long-lasting effects on person's life and well-being.

Depoliticizing the question had adverse consequences, especially when in practice it was nothing but political. In practice, states demonstrated unwillingness to take responsibility when it was not in their interests. The definition of 'refugee' also corresponded to the needs of nation states and a lot of limitations were set in immigration policies. There were novelties introduced in the categorization of refugees, e.g. the term "displaced person" became a category distinct from that of refugee (Razz and Tames 2020: 3). At the beginning of the relief efforts, repatriation was the preferred solution. It affected how the categories, definitions, norms, and practices were introduced between 1943 and 1951:

> [T]he invention of "displaced persons" thus also represented the production of difference with regard to the already established term refugee and its implications: refugees might have to be resettled; displaced persons were to go home (ibid).

The concept of "refugee" has undergone changes over time and the establishment of the 1951 Convention was preceded by a long process of defining two important components – refugee and the non-refoulement principle. When in 1947 more than a million stayed in Europe, still resisting repatriation, the definition of refugee was extended in favor of displaced people also based on human rights principles, since "that group of political dissidents who were neither fascist nor war criminals should not be forced to return because of their right to asylum, which was an essential part of basic rights embodied in the charter of the UN" (Holborn 1956: 32).

In the post-World War II setting the notion of persecution along with non-refoulment were used as a guiding principle in international responses to violence-induced mass displacement. Albeit, there is always a tension between the national and international dimensions of refugee crisis management. Nevertheless, in the long history of confrontation of rights and freedoms advocates and power holders, finally, the birth of international human rights protection regime was prompted. Seemingly, world politicians were willing to adhere to human rights principles as the geopolitical tension was building between two different blocs. However, from the bottom-up perspective, the resistance of a big number of non-returners also laid the foundation for protection being extended to those who did not want to return for well-founded fear of persecution. When international legal and political protection was not sufficient, refugees had tried to pave their way for improving their situation. This agency needs to be historicized.

The motherland calls

The historic setting in which refugees and DPs were repatriated and emigrated is important for our understanding of how Soviet refugees' repatriation and emigration unfolded. It sheds light on what kind of fate awaited repatriated DPs and the attitude the Soviet Union had with regard to the IRO's resettlement work. The Western powers initially agreed with the USSR's demands for the repatriation of Soviet citizens, as they did not expect that many of those who did not want to return would be persecuted (Fitzpatrick 2018: 327). Thus, most citizens of the Soviet Union, and Eastern

European states too, did not receive even limited protection at first. Later, the case of non-repatriable DPs and refugees had become evident due to the number of people who under no circumstances were willing to or could return.

As the displacement crisis was more tangible than ever – this required a "new and comprehensive", "international", "civilian" type of organization with an integrated approach to work. Thus, "one and half million people [who] refused to return" became the IRO's big responsibility. The UN General Council decided to provide care for those who did not wish to return to their countries and widened the authority of United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), the predecessor of IRO, to assist persecuted persons and to supervise the case of DPs even without the consent of the country of origin (Holborn 1956: 23). At the time of the IRO's resettlement program, "Soviet officials condemned the IRO as an 'employment agency' enabling 'the West to enrich itself by resettling the so-called refugees to the countries making the highest bid for their labor'" (Gatrell 2013: 109). With the beginning of the Cold War, the fate of these people also became one of the key elements of growing political confrontations and sharp disputes in the UN between the USSR and the Western powers.

The IRO was operating in this context, and even back then, the information about the sad fate of former POWs and displaced persons who returned to the Soviet Union began to penetrate the borders of the USSR, overcoming prohibitions and the veil of secrecy. Historian, Sheila Fitzpatrick, writes that "far from preventing the formation of a new emigration, Soviet repatriation efforts had actually contributed to its strong anti-Soviet orientation" (ibid.:349). The Motherland called – but few answered, despite intense efforts to "welcome" back the non-returnees.

The return was associated with unsafety and danger, few positive prospects awaited people who Soviet officials somehow thought were "helping" Nazis by being former forced laborers or war prisoners. My own great-grandfather, Saparbay, was subjected to slave labour as a war prisoner for several years in Germany. After liberation, he returned to Kyrgyz SSR to reunite with his beloved wife and children. However, he was interrogated by the NKVD on a regular basis, and even tortured on some occasions. The subject of interrogation of my great-grandfather was mainly about why he did not end his life and kept on living in the hands of enemies. It had quite a toll on his physical

and mental well-being and he passed away in 1955. He did not live to see the moment when, decades later, in 1995, prisoners of war were recognized not only as participants in the war, but also as victims of Nazism. The experience of captivity made them second-class citizens and often hindered them from getting better jobs or enjoying political and civil rights.[6] Therefore, in order to avoid condemnation and stigmatization, they were forced to remain silent about it, conceal it, because it was shameful and inconvenient to talk about.[7] Though the need for labor for post-war reconstruction was a mitigating factor, reducing sentences and amnesties, it was widely known that those who survived after being captured were seen as enemies, traitors, or cowards.

Very little is known about Central Asian non-returnees' experience. Yet, despite the limited information found in the personal files coming from the specific interaction between IRO and applicants seeking for international assistance for emigration, they were presumably seeking to escape the less hopeful fate of their Soviet compatriots.

General information on the selected case files

The IRO constitution set out the eligibility criteria and defined refugees as:

> (a) victims of the Nazi or fascist regimes or of regimes which took part on their side in the second world war, or of the quisling or similar regimes which assisted them against the United Nations, whether enjoying international status as refugees or not; (b) Spanish Republicans and other victims of the Falangist regime in Spain, whether enjoying international status as refugees or not; (c) persons who were considered refugees before the outbreak of the second world war, for reasons of race, religion, nationality or political opinion.' And it defined Displaced Persons as: 'a person who, as a result of the actions of the authorities of the regimes […] has been deported from, or has been obliged to leave his country of

[6] For more details see, for example, Adler, Nanci 1999. "Life in the 'Big Zone': The Fate of Returnees in the Aftermath of Stalinist Repression." *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 5–19.
[7] See, for example Polyan, Pavel 2016. " Sovetskiye voyennoplennyye: skol'ko ikh bylo i skol'ko vernulos'? [Soviet prisoners of war: how many were there and how many returned?]" Demograficheskoye obozreniye, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 43-68; Toguzbaev, Kazis. 30 April 2017. "Obrechennyye na molchaniye. Istoriya sem'i byvshego voyennoplennogo". *Radio Azattyk*. At https://rus.azattyq.org/a/istoria-semyi-byvshego-voennoplennogo/28823206.html

> nationality or of former habitual residence, such as persons who were compelled to undertake forced labor or who were deported for racial, religious or political reasons.[8]

In addition to the Constitution, a more than 200-page long 'Manual for Eligibility Officers', containing the information on where refugees might be coming from, movement trajectories, and guidelines on specific countries and regions,[9] served as an extensive guide to be followed. The determination of eligibility proceeded in three stages: belongingness to any category envisaged in the Constitution or a new category established by General Council; disqualification stage; and lastly, to provide 'valid objections' to returning - at this stage a person would be recognized as a political dissident and would acquire status as a political refugee (Holborn 1956: 204-5). If the background checks were positive and the criteria were met, comprehensive survey using the CM/1 form completed, eligibility officers would then decide whether the applicants would be included in the IRO's Care and Maintenance program and what the scope of support should be.

The applicants originating from the Soviet Central Asian Republics were mostly young males in their twenties, often deported and taken to work by force, except for few war prisoners, pre-war refugees, and a couple of victims of political repression. Holborn would probably put them under the 3rd category of postwar refugees, or so-called neo-refugees, "comprised of persons who preferred liberty at any price to living in a country under a Communist regime" (1956: 100).

As for the reasons not to repatriate, the most common motive stated was political, then religious. Three brave souls explicitly stated "because of the communist regime", one also "dislike[d] the undemocratic regime of his country", while another one stated "I am alone and have no family". Answering the question of what the reason for emigrating to a country of choice was, most of the applicants stated "democracy" and a few pragmatic persons wrote "for employment". The majority of applicants were recognized as eligible and received different statuses depending on their situation. A couple of Nansenites and some others were given refugee status, the rest were attributed to

[8] United Nations, *Constitution of the International Refugee Organization*, 15 December 1946, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 18, p. 3.
[9] Manual for Eligibility Officers / International Refugee Organization (IRO) No. 185, Genf : IRO.

displaced persons, and only one person received legal and political protection (LPP) status. Based on the available records, no one was repatriated and almost everyone was eligible for resettlement.

In fact, the majority of Soviet DPs were repatriated whether voluntarily or forcedly. Overall, the post-war period in Soviet Central Asian Republics was marked by a strong emphasis on rapid industrialization and agricultural development – a continuance of Soviet-style modernization marked by a new wave of repressions, the victims of which were former prisoners of war and even participants in the GPW, representatives of the intelligentsia and artists (Alymkulov 2004: 38-39). Eventually, many of the returnees were persecuted by the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs NKVD, and forced to endure condemnation, sometimes even their families rejected them because of the unwillingness to be associated. In particular, prisoners of war had bigger prospects to experience the worst of the repressive policies upon return (Voronovich & Samatiya 2004), but possibly that also increased their chances to receive the IRO's support. The infamous act No. 270, signed by Stalin in 1941, declared that Red Army soldiers who surrendered or were captured by German forces were to be considered traitors to the Soviet Union and subject to severe punishment, including imprisonment in Gulag labor camps or even execution. For example, according to Kazakh historians, many of the twenty-five thousand Kazakh returnees in 1947 received long sentences in prisons or experienced two camp systems - first Nazi and then Soviet (Belyakov 2017).

About 10 applicants out of 50 had previously received support from the UNRRA or other institutions, and thus had some experience dealing with relief and aid organization and had undergone screening before. The choice of destination places was diverse. Turkey was the most popular destinations, followed by the US and Argentina. No one wanted to stay in Germany, but after employment, marriage or due to a "mass transfer of residual cases to German economy" some stayed for a local settlement, which, according to Holborn, was a 'last resort' solution due to overpopulation and the economic situation (ibid.: 338).

Passing the screening, most of the applicants possessed the Certificate of IRO Eligibility. This version of the document was usually issued to the beneficiaries outside of DP camps, to the so called 'free living/moving' outside of camps. According to the Arolsen archive e-guide, it was created by the IRO Control Centers and this enabled DPs to prove that their "status had been reviewed in the

context of the IRO's Care and Maintenance program and that they had fulfilled the necessary conditions to be recognized as DPs".[10] That means among the fifty applicants a smaller part of applicants had experienced camp life. 'Free living' individuals generally had more control over their life, living independently and being less imposed to the stricter rules in camps. Though this certification did not replace an identity document, it "became increasingly important under the conditions prevailing during the life of the organization" (ibid.: 313) and was a prerequisite for receiving benefits and simplified issuance of travel or work documents, residence permits, and overall rights enjoyment in general.

Social encounter

The CM/1 forms can be seen as an international and multilingual interaction platform for people of diverse backgrounds. Both sides searched for common ground in the negotiating process. The personnel of the IRO as of 1949, according to statistics counted only 2 from Turkey, 2 from USSR, and 15 stateless, out of a total of 2571 (Holborn 1956: 100). Accordingly, there were language and cultural barriers, as the Organization's staff had no prior knowledge of the Central Asian region. The applications are messy in the parts about language and nationality/citizenship, name spelling – those who were helping to fill in the forms were apparently struggling with the task. Though language barriers from time to time made it difficult to capture how the applicants defined themselves, there are some cases where applicants specifically asked for corrections in the nationality or name spelling.

As mentioned earlier, the CM/1 form offered people an opportunity to describe their own path and to define themselves. Muratoglu, Josef used this opportunity to reclaim the original version of his name.[11] The officer tried his best in understanding what constituted the name of the applicant – taking note that Muratoglu could be understood as Muratson, while Muratovich was his patronymic in the Russified version of his name. However, Josef decided to reject the Russified version of his name credentials and identify himself using the original ethnic form. The process of Russification

[10] For a detailed description of the individual administrative documents that AEF, UNRRA and IRO produced to register DPs and refugees and clarify their claims for assistance, see Arolsen Archives: e-Guide https://eguide.arolsen-archives.org/en/archive/details/certificate-of-iro-eligibility/
[11] https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/79509172

of onomastic systems in Central Asia during the Soviet era was a part of the broader effort to promote Russian language and culture as the dominant culture in the Soviet Union. This included the adoption of Russian-style personal names, such as the use of a three-component system of family name, given name, and patronymic, and the addition of Russian suffixes like -ov and -yev to family names (Azhniuk 2011; 257).

The officers were also having a hard time with Turkmenistani applicants from time to time. It was a good opportunity for the Organization's employees to learn about who Turk people were. There was a remark in one form saying: "Turkish (but not from Turkey!)"; or another description for a 'Turkish but not from Turkey' person – "non-Turkish speaking Moslem". Inconsistent self-identifications among applicants were not helpful either.

Moreover, the applicants did not always fill out their application forms themselves, especially if the applicant did not know the language. We can also find notes on the forms, where we get a glimpse into the officers' thoughts and expressions of doubts, opinions, sometimes conversation with other officers, description of an applicant. The following examples are related to the cases of the benefit of doubt, when some applicants would be characterized as "simple", "makes a good impression" or "the story seems to be believable", "man is too simple and too young to be a collaborator" - these kinds of descriptions are often used by IRO officers. Along with "simple" the phrase "primitive 'Kirgis' man" was once used, perhaps to describe an indigenous person, which hints at "underdeveloped" or "uncivilized" labels. As if the Kyrgyz nationality was completely unfamiliar to the officer; though in the Eligibility Manual, it is mentioned under the USSR nationalities list. We may speculate that they were perceived as simple due to lack of higher education or due to humble backgrounds. Overall, it seems that appearing 'simple' was beneficial for an applicant's success, especially for the ones who did not have any documents for their stories to be believable.

"All the time calls himself Turk(e)"

The "I am Turk(e)"-argument was one of the most repeated narratives used by the applicants during the screening process, especially by Turkestani, as if it was somehow considered helpful to negotiate with the IRO's Eligibility Officers over assistance. There is little doubt these people were among

the refugees who resisted returning and were ready to follow a certain narrative if it would save them. To illustrate, one of the cases revealed how Abdulla Turdukul, an Uzbek from Uzbek USSR, asserted that "his place of birth and citizenship entered in the 'Kennkarte'[12] [were] wrong, because he was afraid to tell the truth from fear to be compulsory repatriated to USSR", it is unknown which country he claimed to be from, later he stated his true birthplace in the IRO application and received the assistance.[13] Prior to 1946, repatriation was considered as a natural solution as it was the easiest way to solve the problem of uprooted people, so it will not be wrong to say that some of refugees and DPs like Abdulla were trying to avoid repatriation at all costs way before the IRO started its work.

While we may assume the applicants were in most cases aware of assistance being extended to DPs who were unwilling to return and included under the IRO mandate, it did not stop people from being flexible in negotiating their national identity. For example, a person would write that their nationality was Kirgiz, but kept telling the officers he was a Turk.[14] Most likely for the same reasons as in the first example for passing the screening. There was a lot of inconsistencies in self-identification and nationality of the applicants. A person could be a Nansenite, "USSR", Kazakh, and Turk – all in one within a single application. The E-guide on document explanation says:

> the first CM/1 applications distributed by IRO employees had a field for applicants to write their citizenship. However, it soon became clear that the question of citizenship was not so easy to answer. The revised CM/1 forms used from 1948 onward therefore distinguished between country of citizenship, country of last habitual residence prior to displacement, ethnic or national group, and whether the applicant had a Nansen passport (meaning they were stateless). In field 6(a), the applicants additionally had to mark whether they had claimed the citizenship, it had been officially established, it was a former citizenship or it was only presumed. [15]

[12] The basic identity document in use inside Germany (including occupied incorporated territories) during the Third Reich era. DBpedia. "Kennkarte". Dbperdia. https://dbpedia.org/page/Kennkarte
[13] CM1-File Abdulla Turdukul, 3.2.1.1 / 79847671 /ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.
[14] CM1-File Tölek Nisenalioglu, 3.2.1.1 / 79531399 /ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.
[15] CM/1 application. E-guide. Arsolen Archives. https://eguide.arolsen-archives.org/en/archive/details/cm1-application/

Territorial borders in the Central Asian region were also somewhat blurred. And it is plausible that applications were designed in a way that allowed some space for self-expression in terms of nationality and religion (Borggräfe 2020: 6). Nevertheless, these two factors only added to the confusion; crossings by hand and corrections are proof of that, though it is unlikely that these people were having a genuine identity crisis for most of the cases. Messy nationality/citizenship section can be attributed to the officers too, as many of the applicants were not proficient in German and even Russian, especially in writing. Little to no knowledge about the region on the part of IRO were beneficial for presenting an ambiguous ethnic identity for the applicants.

Agayakov Tolögon[16] of Kyrgyz nationality born in Tyanshan even managed to be eligible for "repatriation" to "his" country of origin – Turkey – being neither Turkish nor born in Turkey. In this case it does not seem to be done on purpose by the applicant, but an indication of how little the IRO staff knew about people populating the Central Asian region. The first time he applied, he was recognized as a refugee and all the data was correct, but during the re-screening he became a Turk/Turkish and this time was identified as someone 'not within the mandate'. His knowledge of German was limited and most likely the officers were helping to fill in the form. Afterwards, the situation was clarified. Interestingly, his first desired destination was Argentina, which changed to Turkey to where he emigrated.

There are other examples of self-identifications known such as "the impressive act of collective self-definition of thousands of surviving Jews" being "the individual strategies of adaptation to the registration procedure" (ibid.: 19). They claimed a Jewish nationality, which was not officially recognized by the Allied powers at the time. However, as the scale of the Jewish refugee crisis became more apparent, the Allies established Jewish DP camps, which provided them with their own space and allowed them to organize their own communities. Self-representation carried political significance (Banko et al 2022; 9) as strategies used by applicants could influence the IRO registration procedures, and consequently, resettlement programs.

[16] CM1-File Agayakov Tolögon, 3.2.1.1 / 79847671 /ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.

According to IRO's resettlement policy it was extremely important to find an environment for refugees with similar culture or one they could integrate easily into (Holborn 1956: 388). No appropriate resettlement scheme existed for Moslem refugees and DPs until an agreement was concluded between and the IRO and Turkey in 1948 (ibid.). It also applied to the examined list of the Soviet Union applicants, as most of them could be considered Moslems. Holborn shares that the Soviet government disapproved of the entry into Turkey of such refugees that brought some difficulties during the preliminary documentation of the Moslems born in Soviet territory. So, their "eagerness to be accepted by the Turkish selection mission and fear of being rejected because of their birth-place caused some of them to false their claims and statements and allege that they were of Turkish origin" (ibid.). These considerations also could explain why the "I am a Turk" narrative was often used by the Soviet Central Asian applicants.

Although the USSR citizens were formally united in one category, they were people not only of different ethnic and social origins, but of different political views, languages, and cultures too. Besides an active machinery of totalitarianism, Central Asian people were going through processes of Sovietization, and the soviet policy of indigenization did not favor markers of 'otherness', such as local cultural traits, and especially different religions. The majority of applicants identified as Muslims, which could explain the often-desired destination – Turkey. One Kyrgyz former prisoner of war, Sydyk, who like other Soviet prisoners of war heard, already in 1943, what would happen to "traitors to the motherland" and understood what awaited him and others on the other side of the front.[17] In 1945, after the victory, he met his German wife at the hospital. He decided not to return and emigrated to Turkey explaining his choice by his Muslim religion. Later he settled in the US by help of another non-returnee, Azamat, who left with the Allies and settled in the United States after captivity and tried as best he could to help surviving fellows with the same tragic fate. These are very rare accounts of people who managed to escape, but they also tell us that people emigrated using alternative channels before the more favorable rules entered into force. Moreover, it also indicates that some social networks or diasporas could have existed, which could prompt "exchanged

[17] Radio Liberty. 1 April 2019. "Sydyk from Batken. Fate of World War II prisoners of war". *Radio Azattyk*. At https://rus.azattyk.org/a/kyrgyzstan-esimde-aldashev-nogoibaeva/29853736.html

knowledge about the opportunities to access aid and support from local, national or international agencies, and about how best to navigate the refugee regime" (Banko et al; 12).

"German wife"

According to the available archival index data, applicants were predominantly male: "83% of the individual applicants and heads were male and only 17% female" (Borggräfe 2020: 56); it also applies to the set of files in concern except one case with a female head applicant. Though, even in that case it seems to be a complicated story entailing reunification and separation of the family.[18] This does not mean, however, that there were no women refugees. They would usually go as family members or spouse dependent on a head of family and chief applicant. There were cases where the Soviet refugees and DPs would get married and often to a woman of German nationality. Sometimes they would get married or have kids in time their case was being processed, which took time, basically starting a family life they did not have before (young and single as most of them were).[19] This in part defies the image of refugees "concerned primarily with their own tragedy" (Holborn 1956: 27) and how uncertainty was handicapping them. In some cases, when applicant was already married, it is possible to learn more about women as they also had to fill in the CM/1 form giving similar information.[20]

Another gendered aspect was the line "can emigrate together with her husband only" - a big emphasis was made on this requirement. Though it's an understandable limitation for wives of German origin to follow the mandate and not to violate eligibility criteria, it also applied to women who could qualified as refugees on their own, but where the head of family typically was a man and the success of the application depended on the chief applicant. The only safeguard was if the applicant proved to be a refugee or DP but was found ineligible for reasons stated in Part II of the Annex I of the

[18] CM1-File Turin Sliwinska Elisabetht Argoniiv , 3.2.1.1 / 916340 /ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives.
[19] It was reflected in the IRO status change documents attached to the application.
[20] For example, Israel Hasanow met his future wife, Emka-Mule Irmgard, of Austrian nationality in Bamberg when appealing for assistance after both got liberated. Prior to that she was a jail prisoner after getting arrested by gestapo and he was a forced laborer at farm. https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/de/document/79167561

Constitution (for example, being war criminals). In such cases the rest of the family could still be assisted.[21]

In another case an applicant stated as a reason for not to be repatriated, the fact that he had a German wife, as this would be seen in a bad light in the USSR.[22] Stalin, indeed, banned marriages with foreigners in the USSR with the issuance of the 1947 Decree "On the prohibition of marriages between citizens of the USSR and foreigners", which was cancelled only in 1953.[23] In other words, the applicant's concern was exceedingly valid. There were at least two cases in which being married to a German was explicitly stated as an amplifying factor for eligibility.

Another way to look at marriage to a DP or refugee is to suggest that women too were trying to navigate "the legalities and politics of refugee status and immigration" (Balint 2021). Could it be another strategy as a way for German women to receive assistance and/or to emigrate with the indirect assistance of the IRO? There is no evidence found in the examined files; however, the notion of "political" persecution and historical DP narratives in general were male-centric assuming that women were apolitical: for them "gaining legitimacy on their own terms was already severely limited by the definition of what constituted persecution and for their relegation to the domestic sphere as dependents" (ibid.; 75-6).

IRO's narrative

The IRO had to balance between their mandated purpose and policies of receiving states. As an international organization operating in 25 countries all over the world, it surely did contribute to the spread of the idea of non-refoulment. At the same time, receiving countries were reluctant to grant asylum. On one side, the IRO with its emigration care and maintenance program, which was specifically designed to help build the skills, provided healthcare, counselling and so on in order to prepare refugees and DPs for easier resettlement (Holborn 1956: 2) and also correspond to the desired profile, - "a young, single, healthy male workers who would help the country's economy,

[21] Holborn, "IRO", Eligibility Chapter.
[22] CM1-File Muratoglu Erna, 3.2.1.1 / 79509172/ITS Digital Archive, Arolsen Archives https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/en/document/79509172
[23] Politburo resolution "On the prohibition of marriages between Soviet citizens and foreigners," February 15, 1947, in Stalin i kozmopolitizm: Dokumenty agitpropa TsK KPSS, 1945–1953 (Moscow, 2005), 107–8.

but would not be a burden on it" (Borggräfe 2020: 18), - to facilitate the process. While it is important to keep in mind that the IRO was in a position of power in relation to refugees and DPs, as a temporary international organization designed for the specific project, the organization was not more powerful than all states together. There was a limit to what it could do. Nation-states still defined who belonged and who did not, how many people and what kinds of persons could enter country for settlement. For instance, Ahmetcan Omerhan was either supposed to go to France or be returned from France, because he was rejected due to the absence of desired job opportunities (in agriculture). In any case, under the IRO's assistance he later completed some courses, got recommendations, and tried his chances with Pakistan as a history teacher.[24]

Based on the set of documents examined (and the rare health reports included), it appears that health condition (having missing limbs, terminal diseases; being "unfit for heavy physical work", or "bedridden") was not a disqualifying factor. Moreover, they were sent to their desired destination (at least in two cases they were known to be sent to the US with more expensive oversea transfer). Hospitals in Germany were in a very bad condition (Holborn 1956: 205), and, certainly, better health facilities or rehabilitation programs were necessary for those beneficiaries. This fragmentary example does not show the whole picture and it is necessary to always question how the IRO was balancing between raising its beneficiaries' chances of being qualified for a new life and appealing to or influencing the attitudes of the receiving countries. And, most importantly, how it affected the negotiation process.

Conclusion

The available records in the Arolsen archives depict how Central Asians, who chose to live free from fear and persecution by refusing to be repatriated, and risk to leave behind their previous lives for a chance to have a new beginning, were expressing their agency in negotiating their future in different ways. For them, receiving a certificate of IRO eligibility was the first stage for acquiring a citizenship status in the future, which often implied an access to the other rights and opportunities, and becoming 'humans' again. In the end, one of the reasons why non-refoulement emerged as a norm

[24] https://collections.arolsen-archives.org/de/document/79547637

was because "the last million" resisted repatriation after the end of the war– it was a collective response to rules and policies that did not recognize their fundamental rights.

This group of applicants were small in number and likely they had fewer nationalist sentiments in comparison to the larger refugee nation groups. Rather they could be seen simply as political refugees for whom any other country where there would be no persecution and opportunities to build a new life was a good destination. The findings also reflect a desire among people in the region to reclaim their cultural heritage and assert their own identities. Likewise, the cases of strategic national identity narratives or concealing information, presenting either a specific or ambiguous image, can be seen as an expression of refugees' and DPs' agency. There is a gender aspect in the application processing too – the process was male-centered placing women in a disadvantageous position in claiming rights. These negotiations also tell us something about the social encounter not just of an international institution/state with a stateless person of ethnic minority, but also somewhat of different cultures – western and non-western.

The fear was genuine, and prospects of persecution were real: negative attitudes towards prisoners of war and captivity experience on its own, lack of opportunities at home, fear for their newfound families. Those who had families back home had to make a very difficult decision and not be in touch or contact anyone for their own sake. They were also people of different backgrounds; ordinary people whose lives were altered by the forces outside of their control. They continued to adapt to the new life circumstances – one of the applicants was a camp leader, some worked during and after the war, led independent lives, learned new languages and skills. They were engaged in local economies; even though involuntarily, they moved around different places like Poland, Ukraine, Austria, France. They met different people – sometimes their life partners. While it's true that their possibilities were limited, and there is also not much information about the war experience or trauma, hardships they had endured, we see that were not completely clueless and passive about negotiating their future.

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DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

An Analysis of the League of Nations Secretariat's Political Section, 1919-1939

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ABSTRACT: This article studies interwar diplomacy. It does so, through the lens of the League of Nations Secretariat's Political Section. It seeks to uncover how the section was created and how it was meant to operate. Using a prosopographical social network analysis the article dynamically maps the composition of the Political Section and what characterised the section. It studies how the employees worked and which form of agency they had. As such, the article has four key findings. First, the section was highly professionalised with more than 60% having a background in diplomacy providing the expertise and qualifications to handle diplomatic conflicts. Second, the section had high diversity in the nationality of the employees and a relatively low amount of British and French employees. Third, the employees of the Political Section generally had a high degree of agency regarding how they handled conflicts which they could use to expand their tasks and area of responsibility. Last, the ability to control information was the most important competence for the officials of the Political Section. On a methodological level, this paper provides an example of how social network analysis can be a useful tool in historical studies.

KEYWORDS: Institutional history, diplomatic relations, League of Nations, agency, actor-based approach

Introduction

"[…] I think it would be a mistake for Monsieur de Montenach, as a member of the Secretariat, to pay a visit to Upper Silesia at the present time",[1] wrote Eric Drummond, the first Secretary-General of the League of Nations Secretariat, about an employee of the Political Section. To Drummond's discontent, Monsieur de Montenach nonetheless went to Upper Silesia. Which form of agency did the employees of the Political Section have, since they seemingly could go against the Secretary-General? And could the employees influence the outcome of conflicts and disputes?

The League of Nations was created in 1919 at the Paris Peace Conference. Its primary task was to secure world peace.[2] The Political Section was one of 11-14 different sections that formed the core of the Secretariat. The number of sections varied because they were at times combined or split. Besides the core, the Secretariat had an internal administration. Each section was in charge of either a political or technical question. These could be, but were not limited to, health, disarmament, and social questions. The Secretariat did the preparatory work and was the civil service of the two other organs of the League: The Assembly and the Council. In the preparatory work the Secretariat could not propose solutions to conflicts. The Council and Assembly had the decision-making abilities. When a solution was found, it was the task of the Secretariat to supervise its execution (Ranshofen-Wertheimer, 1945: 19).

Among employees of the Secretariat there was a clear internal hierarchy. The highest-ranking official was the Secretary-General. Below him was the Deputy-Secretary-General followed by the Under-Secretary-Generals. The latter was in charge of a section of the Secretariat. All three positions had an office with employees attached to it. The sections with no Under-Secretary-General in charge had either a Director or Chief of Section with Director ranking highest of the two. All the employees

[1] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia […]", 1922: 8. United Nations Archives Geneva - League of Nations Archives (LONA) R1671-41-20675-24751.
[2] "League of Nations Covenant" UN Geneva accessed 18/01-23, https://www.ungeneva.org/en/covenant-lon.

were placed in one of three divisions.[3] I will focus on the employees in the first division who handled conflict-related work.

This article will study the Political Section of the League of Nations Secretariat and the employees of the section. While the Secretariat had no decision-making abilities (Ranshofen-Wertheimer, 1945: 17-20; Kahlert, 2019: 200) the informal structures of the Secretariat allowed the employees to influence the decisions in other ways. Whether it was possible depended on the employees, their competence, and their agency. I will set out with the question: *How was the Political Section composed, and which form of agency did the employees have?*

The article will start by studying the creation of the Political Section. A social network analysis (SNA) will be used to uncover the prosopographical traits of the employees of the section and show the composition of the section. Prosopography is the analysis of the characteristics of a group of individuals whose personal biography might otherwise be untraceable. For this analysis nationality and professional background were the most important factors, as they defined how the section and employees functioned. The connection between micro and macro perspectives can sometimes be hard to find. SNA can help uncover the connection between the two (Granovetter, 1973: 1360). In my analysis the micro perspective is the individual employee's nationality and background. The macro perspective is how the Political Section was organised, how it functioned and how it handled its workload. In order to analyse the professional backgrounds of the officials, I have created 20 different categories of backgrounds, with the use of information from the personnel files of the individual employees of the Secretariat. This analysis can show how specific nationalities and backgrounds were connected to the different sections. The SNA will be supported by documents from the League's Appointments Committee – the committee where the highest-ranking officials of the Secretariat discussed the hiring of high-level officials to the Secretariat.

Next, I will study how the section worked by looking at how different employees handled specific conflicts. Along with the study of the section's creation this can uncover both the formal and

[3] Personnel List. LONA S967.

informal structures under which the employees functioned. This can provide an understanding of which form of agency the employees had.

State of the art

The Political Section was one of the original sections and started working before the Secretariat was fully functional (Ranshofen-Wertheimer, 1945: 101). Within the Secretariat's internal hierarchy, the Political Section was placed the highest. Whenever a job was available here it was sought after, and a transfer from other parts of the Secretariat to the Political Section was considered a promotion (Kahlert, 2020: 65). When all other sections suffered budget cuts in the start of the 1930's the budget of the Political Section remained untouched, and even saw an increase at the end of the 1930s (Tyler, 2018). The section handled some high-profile conflicts. Despite its central role in the Secretariat there is practically no research that focus solely and explicitly on the section.

The lack of research on the Political Section and its modus operandi is noticeable when looking at the rest of the historiography of the League. The focus has changed from seeing the League as a failure to looking at how the first International Organisation (IO) operated. This historiographic turn can´t be ascribed to a specific set of factors, however, there are two factors that were influential. The first factor is the transnational turn in international history more generally. Researchers have begun to use the study of the League as an entrance point to follow different aspects of the League's work across borders (Gram-Skjoldager, 2019). The second factor is captured in an article written by Susan Pedersen in 2007 called "Back to the League of Nations". In this article she calls for researchers to study the League's modus operandi and what it meant at the time. This foreshadowed research focusing on the inside of the League and, particularly, the various policy areas under its domain. For Pedersen, it is important to study the employees of the Secretariat as they were the ones doing the work. To do this it is important to use the League of Nations archives (Pedersen, 2007: 1116).

Among the researchers who followed the turn in historiography, this new focus in the research

> […] is essential not only to enhance our understanding of the League and interwar internationalism themselves, but also to help us gain a firmer purchase on the intractable political and ethical problems of global governance in the present. (Finney, 2019: 275)

The increased focus on the employees of the Secretariat has led Haakon A. Ikonomou and Karen Gram-Skjoldager to argue that the League of Nations not only created an institution for a new kind of multilateral diplomacy. It also created a new profession: The international civil servant (ICS) (Gram-Skjoldager & Ikonomou, 2020: 215). The institutionalization of this new profession started quickly after the creation and initial staffing of the Secretariat. For Eric Drummond it was important to hire ICS who were loyal to this new institution and not their home country. Therefore, he tried to implement "[…] the multinational mode of organization with his internationalist ideals of a neutral, independent civil service working for the common interests among the League's member states." (Gram-Skjoldager & Ikonomou, 2020: 223). Gram-Skjoldager and Ikonomou (2020: 226-229) trace the idea of the international civil servant from the League to the present in organisations like the United Nations.

The prosopographical approach and the LONSEA database used in this article were also used in two articles by Torsten Kahlert (Kahlert, 2019; Kahlert, 2020). The prosopographical approach studies the traits of a group of people, through a standardized set of questions (or categories). For this article, I use an upgraded version of the LONSEA database, which I created for the VisuaLeague project. (Ikonomou et al., 2023) This dataset includes nationality, length of contracts, gender, position, and division. In the upgrade, I have added professional background. Further, drawing on the original personnel files and the datasets coming out of the LONTAD-project (the UN-led digitizing of the League archives), the dataset has been cleaned and upgraded, securing better precision, but also new categories such as "professional background". The prosopographical approach is especially useful to study the actors behind "the great men" (Kahlert, 2019: 197). Kahlert argues that it is important to study the employees because they were "[…] important cultural brokers, shapers of policies and carriers of the ideals of the organizations" (Kahlert, 2020: 49). They could set the agenda and were a big part of the decision-making process (Kahlert, 2019: 191).

The Secretariat was not static; it is, thus, important to study the Secretariat dynamically (Kahlert, 2019: 191). In his study, Kahlert shows that the Secretariat evolved. It adapted to the tasks with which it was met. Kahlert ascribes this ability to the fact that the Secretariat had few formal demands (Kahlert, 2019: 199). The dynamic aspect of the Secretariat can also be seen in the prosopography of the Directors (who were the heads of functional sections). Kahlert identifies three generations of Directors (Kahlert, 2019: 192-193). I apply a dynamic study of the composition of the Political Section. It will use the three generations of directors as the timeframe. The dates will follow the three directors' contracts: Paul Mantoux 1919-1927, Yotaro Sugimura 1927-1933 and Frank P. Walters 1933-1939.

The article will first propose the analytical framework I apply to study the agency of the employees of the Political Section; then it will turn to the professional and national composition of the section and how that affected the section's ability to function and handle different conflicts. Lastly, the article will study the practices and agency of the Political Section through the actions of specific employees. The core argument of the article is that the employees of the Political Section had a relatively high degree of agency, especially regarding the way, they performed the tasks, and that this was anchored in their ability to gather, share, and use information.

Diplomatic agency – an analytical framework

"Diplomacy does not take place simply between states but wherever people live in different groups" (Sharp, 2009: i). Therefore, diplomacy is "[…] a practice – for handling certain kinds of relations between human beings" (Sharp, 2009: 13). It is a system of communication, negotiation and information (Der Derian, 1987: 6-7, 216). For New Diplomatic History, a recent turn in the historical study of diplomacy, information-gathering is an important aspect of the diplomat's work, which includes a much broader range of actors than merely official diplomats (Scott-Smith & Weisbrode, 2019: 3). This aspect was in fact a key part of the work of the Political Section.

The employees of an IO, the ICS, have the ability to start and change the direction of debates and affect the IO by using the resources that it possesses (Xu & Weller, 2008: 35-37). This ability is a result of two factors: formal institutional circumstances and informal possibilities that ICS create

themselves. These two factors are key to understanding the role of the ICS (Xu & Weller, 2008: 44). As Kahlert argued the Secretariat had few formal institutional demands.

The formal institutional circumstances are created by treaties and other regulations. They can be defined as formal agency and defines the ICS' ability to function. The informal factors are the ICS' own competences, legitimacy, and culture (Xu & Weller, 2008: 44). These elements form part of what can be defined as informal agency. This study will try to identify both the formal agency – as defined by the leaders of the Secretariat – and the informal agency of the ICS. The latter shows that the ICSs can define their own role.

The perhaps most important competence for an ICS is the control of information. The ICS analyses information and chooses which information to pass on. This in turn dictates the direction of debates and, therefore, shapes the outcome (Xu & Weller, 2008: 46). I will attempt to determine how this was achieved through the study of how the section worked. A second competence that the ICS possesses is technical expertise. If an IO is technically specialised it is less open to political insecurities. This provides the ICS with the possibility to get more influence on the outcome of conflicts (Xu & Weller, 2008: 40-41). The study of the employees' background will determine whether the section was technically specialised. The legitimacy of the ICS comes from the fact, that they are multinational and ostensibly have no loyalty to their home country (Xu & Weller, 2008: 41-42, 47). An aspect that was important for Drummond. Political scientists Yi-Chong Xu and Patrick Weller describe ICSs as not only passive receivers of information. They function as they find most fitting and will try to expand their areas of responsibilities. Whether they can do this depends on their competence (Xu & Weller, 2008: 40). When there is no clear demarcation of the ICSs' functions, a possibility appears for the ICS to expand their jurisdiction and take on responsibilities that were not originally intended for them (Xu & Weller, 2008: 45).

The composition of the Political Section

The start of the section

The Political Section was one of the original sections. The tasks of the section were clear from the start while also allowing some freedom.[4] One of the main tasks of the section was to compare and analyse the information it received. They would then make a report to the Secretary-General, the Council or the Assembly. The report had to be objective and impartial.[5] They would receive the information from states, private parties, or the other sections in the Secretariat. The importance of receiving complete and comprehensive information was key to the functioning of the section.[6] The freedom they had in this task was, that they chose which information to bring forward in the report and which information to leave out. Because the Secretariat was international it was important that "[…] [it] should be denied any power of its own […]."[7] Therefore they should not recommend a solution to the Council or the Assembly; the solution should come from national beliefs.[8] Their control of information meant that they could nevertheless influence the solution.

The second main task of the Political Section was to keep an eye on different political situations and developments. They did this to be able to warn the Secretary-General, the Council or the Assembly about situations that might result in conflicts.[9] The Political Section was in this sense a political watchdog making sure that the Covenant or the treaties weren't violated. To do this in the best possible way, Drummond thought that it would be beneficial to organise the section in geographically specialised groups.[10] This task also allowed for some freedom for the section, as the employees chose which situations were monitored. This choice was limited by the geographical area assigned to the employee and the expectation of the director.[11]

[4] "Organisation of the League - Minute stating temporary Staff necessary to begin with and outlining Scheme", 1919: 2. LONA R1455-29-255-255.
[5] "The League of Nations - S.G, Mr Butler - Memo by Secretary General on Organisation and Functions of the League of Nations and Notes thereon by Mr Butler", 1919: 4. LONA R1455-29-262-255.
[6] "The League of Nations - S.G, Mr Butler […]", 1919: 6 & 11. LONA R1455-29-262-255.
[7] "The League of Nations - S.G, Mr Butler […]", 1919: 4. LONA R1455-29-262-255.
[8] "The League of Nations - S.G, Mr Butler […]", 1919: 4-5. LONA R1455-29-262-255.
[9] "The League of Nations - S.G, Mr Butler […]", 1919: 4. LONA R1455-29-262-255.
[10] "Organization and work of the League – Memo", 1919: 9. LONA R1455-29-260-255.
[11] "Report on the composition, functions and activities of the Political Section", 1921: 2. LONA C-E-2_EN.

Because the League of Nations was a new and untried system, the first director of the Political Section – French national Paul Mantoux – did not think that one could expect states to send their most confidential documents.[12] If the documents that states sent were only vague commonalities, no useful information could be gained from them. Therefore, it had to be made clear for states that they had to send complete and comprehensive information.[13] To deal with this problem Mantoux thought that the section should hire experts and it should be possible for these experts to visit the states in conflict as this would allow for a comprehensive study of it.[14]

The *modus operandi* of the Political Section was discussed by Mantoux, Drummond and American national, Raymond B. Fosdick – Under-General-Secretary until it was clear that the US would not be a member of the League. Despite Drummond and Fosdick agreeing that complete information was essential, and states could not be expected to send this, they did not believe that it would be wise to send officials from the Secretariat to study conflicts.[15]

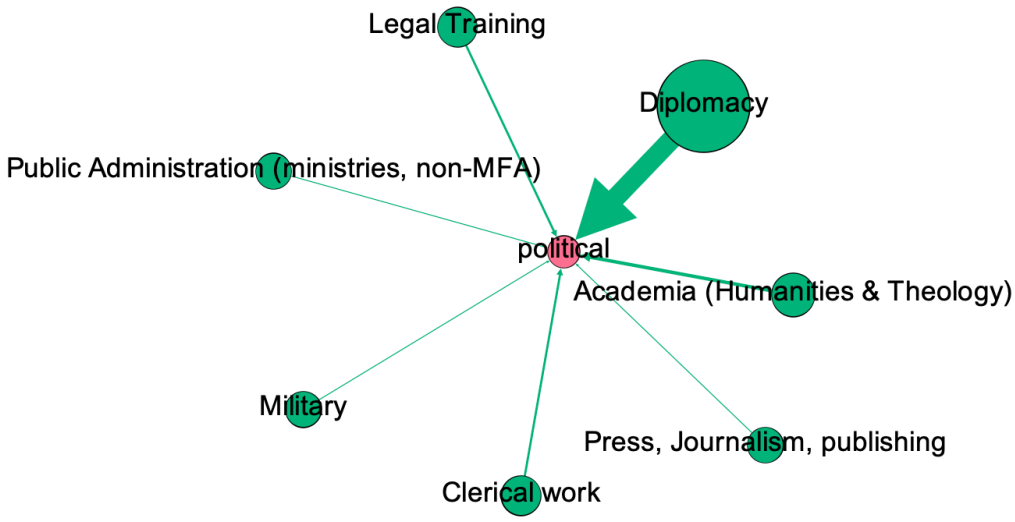
This discussion needs to be seen in the context of early interwar relations and the states that the three represented. France saw the League as a way to secure French security and a way to secure that the restrictions imposed on Germany, through the Treaty of Versailles following their defeat in the First World War, was kept. Therefore, they wanted a League with the proper means to secure peace (Pedersen, 2007: 1115). Woodrow Wilson had a hard time getting support for joining the League from US Senate and Congress. Therefore, it was important for the American representatives that the League would not have too much influence in national policies (Mazower, 2013: 118-119). For Britain the focus was on functionality and bureaucracy. Drummond didn't want the Political Section to have the role that Mantoux wanted. This would give the section too much power and could potentially compromise the unassailable neutrality of the bureaucracy.

[12] "Functions of the Political Section - Mr. Mantoux - Memo on the Functions of the Political Section.", 1919: 10. LONA R552-11-1169-1169.
[13] "Functions of the Political Section - Mr. Mantoux - Memo on the Functions of the Political Section.", 1919: 11. LONA R552-11-1169-1169.
[14] "Functions of the Political Section - Mr. Mantoux - Memo on the Functions of the Political Section.", 1919: 10-11. LONA R552-11-1169-1169.
[15] "Functions of the Political Section - Mr. Mantoux - Memo on the Functions of the Political Section.", 1919: 2-5. LONA R552-11-1169-1169.

Who was hired?

As can be seen from *figure 1*, 61% of the first division employees, that is the highest rank of international officials, in the Political Section had a background in diplomacy. This was a crucial aspect of how the section functioned. An important competence for diplomats was their ability to control information. Which mattered for the Political Section. The diplomatic background gave the employees an understanding of political information and the international world, which was essential to the section as their work with political information was continuous.[16] The high number of diplomats gave the section the ability to handle and analyse the information they were provided with.

Figure 1: Background for first division employees in Political Section.



[16] "Appointments Committee, January 1922-August 1923": 12. LONA S954-263-1.

Figure 2 demonstrates that the professionalisation of the section started right away; 5 of the 8 employees in 1919-1927 had a background in diplomacy.

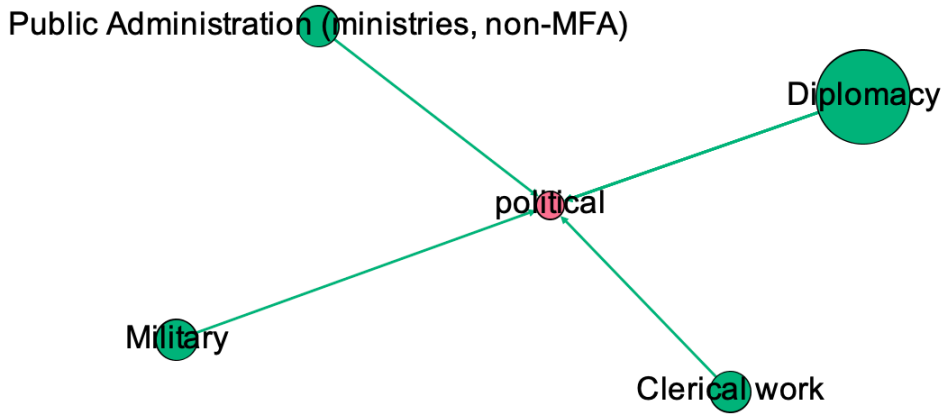


Figure 2: Background for first division employees in the Political Section, 1919-1927.

This trend was a part of Mantoux's hopes; a section composed of experts able to deal with the political issues that might emerge in the international world. In 1927-1933 the section was still largely composed of diplomats as can be seen from figure 3.

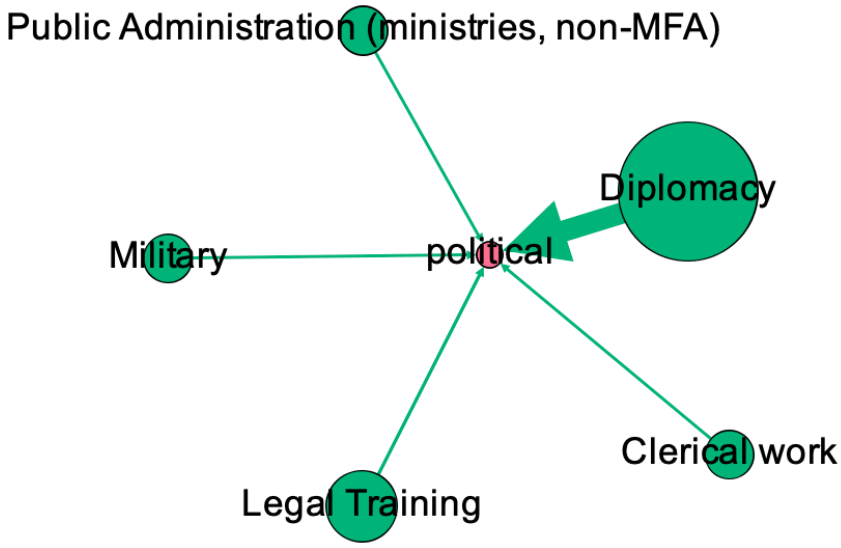


Figure 3: Background for first division employees in the Political Section, 1927-1933.

However, employees with legal training were also hired. This was an important factor for Yotaro Sugimura – the Director of the Political Section at that time. He believed that it would give the

section the best prerequisites to handle conflicts of different character.[17] The employees with legal training expanded the section's area of expertise. Sugimura himself had a doctorate in law.[18] This could have influenced his preference of employees with legal training.

Figure 4 shows that the professionalisation started under Mantoux and partially continued under Sugimura, was also continued during the time of the last director of the Political Section, Frank P. Walters. 1933-1939 saw the highest number of employees with a background in diplomacy, i.e., 2/3 of the employees.

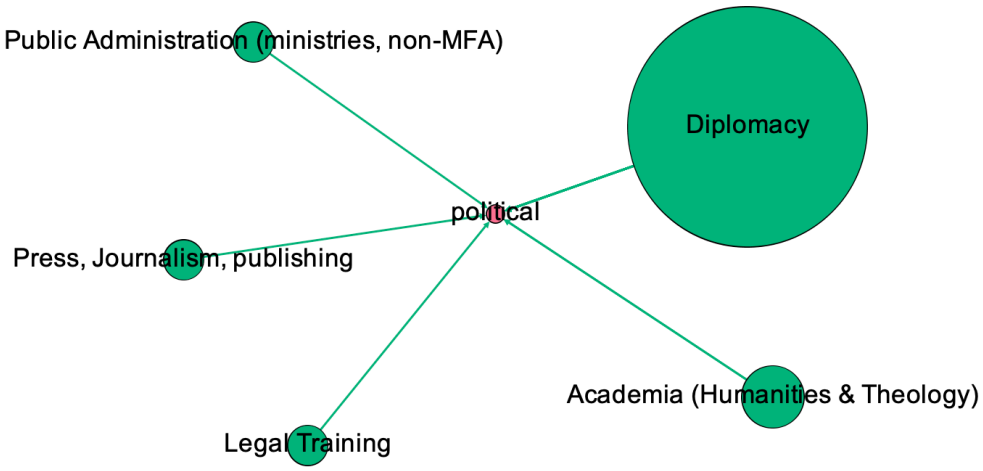


Figure 4: Background for first division employees in the Political Section, 1933-1939.

This high number was unique to the Political Section. It was important that the employees of the Political Section had a great knowledge of the political world.[19] For comparison, looking at figure 5, 6 and 7, diplomacy is not the most common background among the employees in other sections. A comparison of the four figures – 1, 5, 6, and 7 – shows that each section was professionalised towards its specific functional demands. Accordingly, for the Information Section, a press

[17] "Appointments Committee, January 1927-August 1928": 581. LONA S956-265-1.
[18] "Yotaro Sugimura Personel File" LONA S889-194-3406.
[19] "Appointments Committee, May 1930-December 1931": 315. LONA S957-266-1.

background was dominant, for the Legal Section it was legal training and for the Disarmament Section it was a military one.

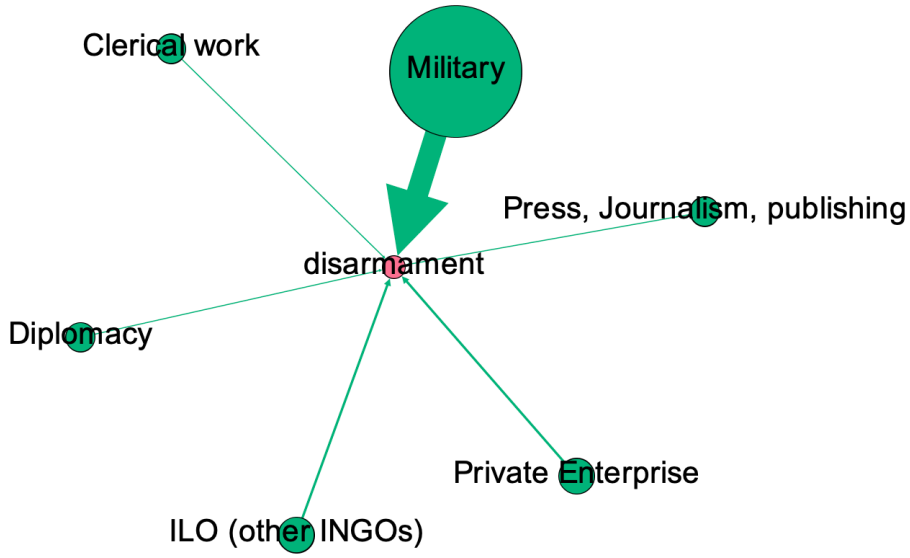
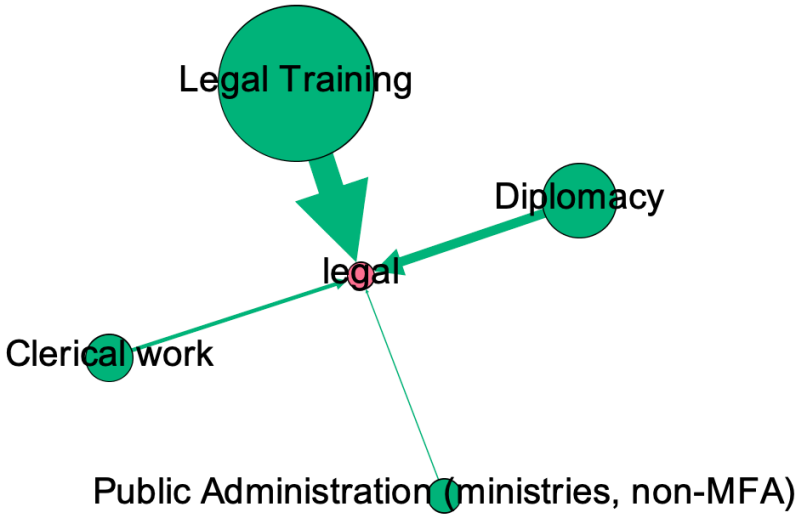


Figure 5: Background for first division emplyees in the Disarmament Section.

Figure 6: Backgrund for first division employees in the Legal Section.



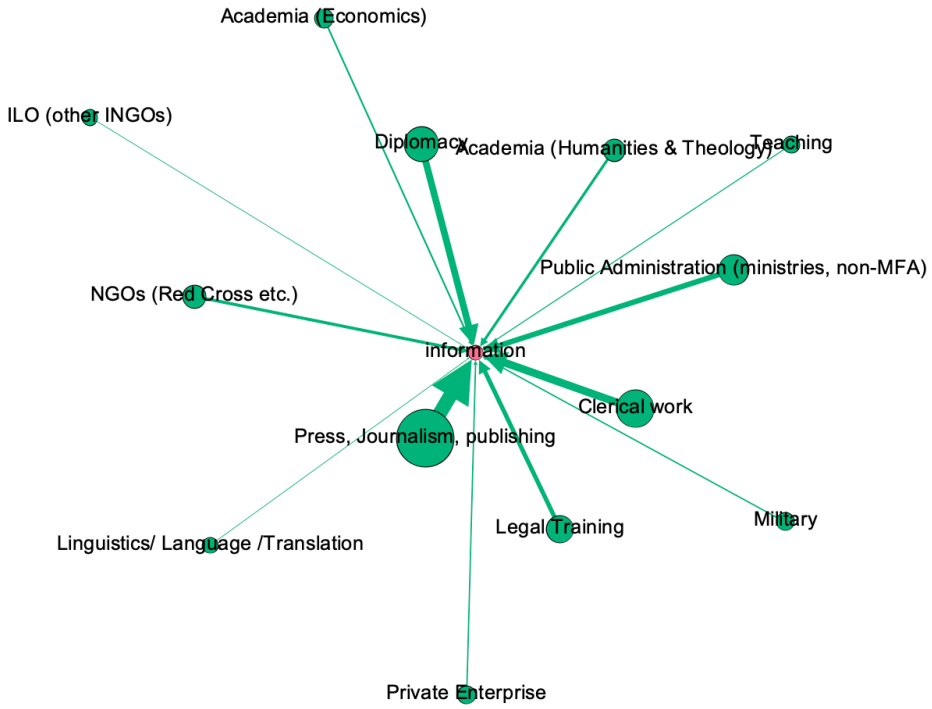


Figure 7: Background for first division employees in the Information Section.

The comparison of the figures above also shows that in the Political Section, more varying backgrounds were present. The only exception was the Information Section which by far had the most employees. The Political Section dealt with different types of conflicts, e.g., it sometimes had to deal with disarmament issues or minorities issues as part of the conflict.[20] Because of the diverse nature of the conflicts, it was important for the section to have a variety of experts, which the different backgrounds provided.

The discussion of employment of two employees in the Appointments Committee exemplifies the competences the section was looking for in their employees. In both cases their diplomatic qualifications, background and experience with diplomatic work were highlighted.[21] In the case of the Swede, Bertil Arne Renborg, his knowledge of countries with which his home country had no affiliations, was seen as a positive competence.[22] This would give the section neutrality and

[20] "Appointments Committee, January 1927-August 1928": 291. LONA S956-265-1.
[21] "Appointments Committee, May 1930-December 1931": 327. LONA S957-266-1; "Appointments Committee, January-December 1926": 124. LONA S955-264-2.
[22] "Appointments Committee, May 1930-December 1931": 327. LONA S957-266-1.

objectivity which was essential. The members of the Appointments Committee also mentioned objectivity and neutrality for the German diplomat, Cecil von Renthe-Fink.[23]

Another factor that influenced the composition and the functions of the section was the nationalities of the employees. It decided which conflicts that the employees dealt with.[24] The employees handled communications and cooperation with the government of their home country.[25] The section could not have employees from all member states. This didn't mean that it could not handle conflicts or communication and cooperation in the rest of the world. If the section lacked employees from a given country, an employee hailing from a neighbouring country or an employee with knowledge of the country – like Bertil Arne Renborg – was beneficial to handle communications and conflicts.[26]

As seen in figure 8, the Political Section had the highest diversity in the nationalities of the employees. The section had 1.95 employees per nationality compared to the Disarmament Section (2.5), Mandate Section (2.1), Information Section (7.7) and the Legal Section (2.2).[27] The Political Section was one of the sections with the fewest employees. However, this was not a deciding factor for national diversity; both the Mandate Section and the Disarmament Section had fewer employees yet lower national diversity. The national diversity in the Political Section enhanced the section's ability to handle conflicts and communications around the world. The relation between the League and national governments was important as this was the main way for the League to get information about conflicts.

It was essential to maintain the high national diversity in the section. As such, the leaders of the League moved employees from one section to another.[28] At other times the Appointments Committee only considered applicants with a certain nationality.[29] Even though the leaders of the

[23] "Appointments Committee, January-December 1926": 124. LONA S955-264-2.
[24] "Appointments Committee, August 1924-December 1925": 640. LONA S955-264-1.
[25] "Appointments Committee, January 1927-August 1928": 432. LONA S956-265-1; "Appointments Committee, September 1928-April 1930": 477. LONA S956-265-2.
[26] "Appointments Committee, May 1930-December 1931": 327. LONA S957-266-1.
[27] Updated LONSEA-Database.
[28] "Appointments Committee, January-December 1926": 358. LONA S955-262-2.
[29] "Appointments Committee, January 1932-December 1934": 125. LONA S957-266-2; "Appointments Committee May 1930-December 1931": 515. LONA S957-266-1.

League sought to have non-Europeans in the section,[30] the Political Section was highly Eurocentric. The First division consisted also only of men. (Ikonomou et al., 2023)

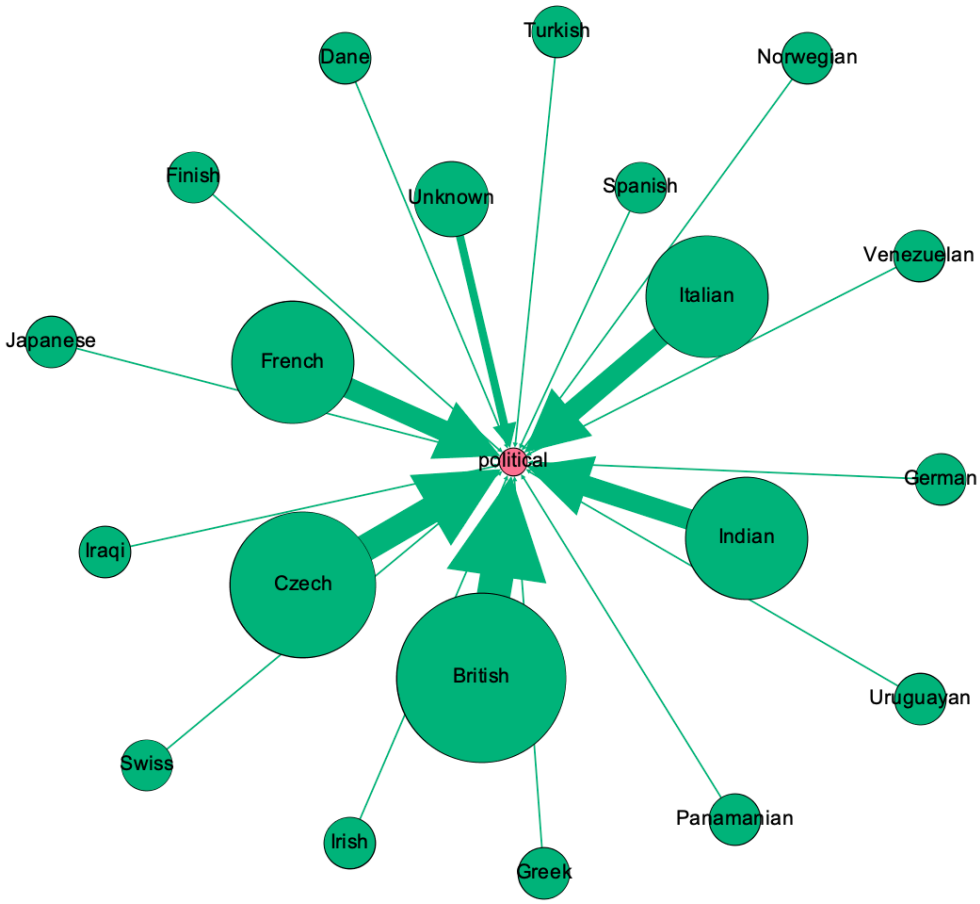


Figure 8: Nationality for first division employees in the Political Section.

The Political Section had a high national diversity from the start. This can be seen from figure 9. Across the Secretariat most employees were from the great powers, France and Britain. However, this was not as distinct in the Political Section. While British and French remained the biggest groups, the group of Italians was almost as big. Further the section had employees from the whole world and not just Western Europeans. This gave them expertise in a wide range of geographical areas.

[30] "Appointments Committee May 1930-December 1931": 705. LONA S957-266-1.

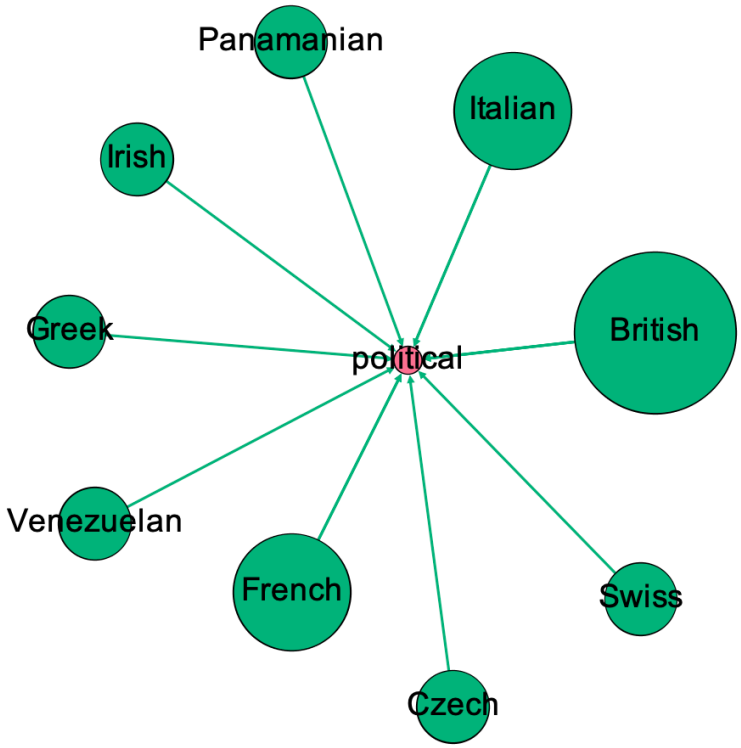


Figure 9: Nationality for first division employees in the Political Section, 1919-1927.

Figure 10 demonstrates that the tendency from the first period continued in the second period and was even enhanced. There were no French employees, and the British employees were not the biggest group. In the second period a high number of Czech employees were hired. This was due to a high number of conflicts in Eastern Europe as can be seen from the documents of the Political Section.[31] Furthermore, the Czech diplomatic service was highly ranked in the international hierarchy.[32] The high number of Czech employees provided the section with the necessary geographic expertise that was needed when handling the many conflicts. This resulted in replacing Czech employees with new Czechs when the old employees resigned.[33]

The importance of keeping employees of certain nationalities which were beneficial to handling specific conflicts is exemplified by the employment of the Greek Thanassis Aghnides in the Political

[31] LONA Political Section Registry and Section Files.
[32] "Appointments Committee October 1923-June 1924": 360. LONA S954-263-2.
[33] "Appointments Committee January 1927-August 1928": 350. LONA S956-265-1.

Section. In 1927 and 1928 it was discussed whether Aghnides should be transferred to another section. This was at a time when the Political Section handled many conflicts in Greece and surrounding countries. Aghnides had great knowledge of Greek culture and he was in charge of all communication and cooperation with the Greek government. This was vital for the section and Aghnides had a huge role in handling these conflicts. Therefore, Sugimura opposed his transfer.[34]

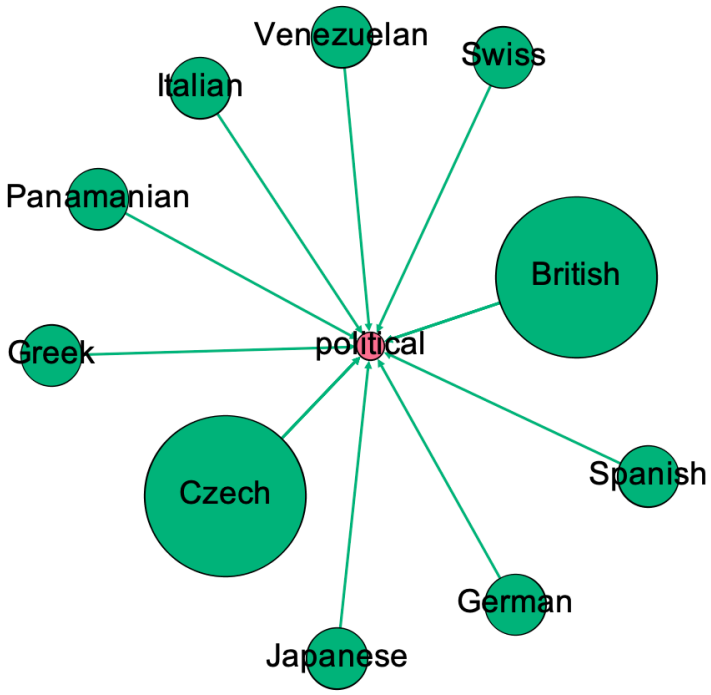


Figure 10: Nationality for first division employees in the Political Section, 1927-1933.

As can be seen from figure 11 the Political Section had even greater national diversity in the third period. Further, only a few nationalities, including British and French, were represented by more than one employee. The higher number of nationalities correlated to a higher number of member states. The section was ranked highest in the internal hierarchy of the Secretariat. Therefore, member states wanted an employee in the Political Section from their country.[35] As such, the section continued to have a high national diversity, lending to the section's high geographic expertise.

[34] "Appointments Committee January 1927-August 1928": 477-478. LONA S956-265-1.
[35] "Appointments Committee October 1923-June 1924": 460. LONA S954-263-2.

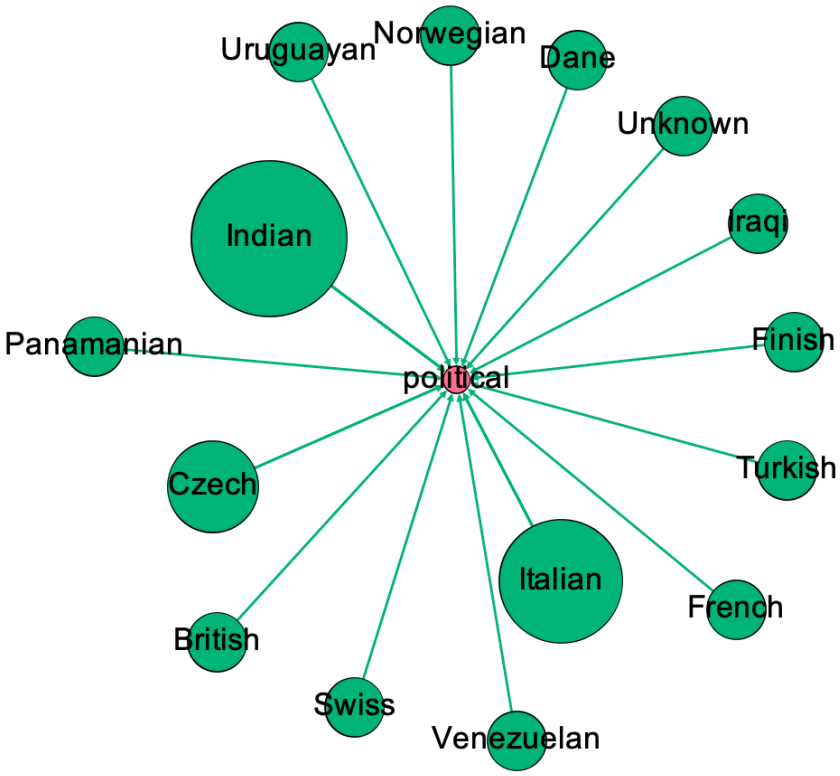


Figure 11: Nationality for first division employees in the Political Section, 1933-1939.

How did they work?

By briefly diving into the work of specific employees in different conflicts, this section will study how the Political Section and its employees functioned to uncover which form of agency the employees had. The documents created by the officials of the section show their actions; while the official documents can give insights into the formal restrictions the officials operated under.

Only the Political Section and its employees had the competence and qualifications to handle disputes of a political character. Therefore, they were to assist other sections with such disputes. The cooperation between the Political Section and the Disarmament and Mandates Sections was especially important.[36] Because of this assistance, the employees of the Political Section could influence conflicts and disputes outside their initial area of responsibility.

[36] "Appointments Committee January 1927-August 1928": 291-293. LONA. S956-265-1.

The Director of the section could entrust the sole responsibility of a certain dispute to specific high-ranking officials.[37] If an official was entrusted with the responsibility of a question, it gave him a lot of freedom to act as he thought beneficial and, therefore, a high degree of agency. At times when the Political Section had a lot of difficult work, it could be necessary to give responsibilities to officials that normally would not – because of their rank – be entrusted with these responsibilities.[38] This made it possible for the officials to expand their degree of agency, if they had the necessary competence to do so.

Harold Nicolson had the responsibility of handling the Vorarlberg question. The dispute concerned whether the region of Vorarlberg should be part of Austria or Switzerland. Whether Nicolson was given this responsibility, or if it was a responsibility that he unilaterally took, is unclear. The earliest document in the file related to this dispute, is a report sent by Nicolson to Eric Drummond on November 24, 1919. The first sentence in this report is "As will have been seen from the Press, this question is again exciting attention […]"[39] This indicates that there was no previous concern over this issue within the League. None of the parties involved in the conflict asked the League's assistance in resolving it.[40] It seems that Nicolson unilaterally took the responsibility of handling this dispute and, thereby, using his agency. However, he was dependent of the press to supply information, and the expectations of his superiors was that Nicolson acted when receiving information about a political conflict.

His report was based on information supplied to the Political Section by third party actors, such as the press.[41] This was a restricting factor since Nicolson was limited to information supplied to him. He still chose which information to include in the report and sent it directly to Drummond. The fact that Mantoux did not oversee his actions demonstrates Nicolson's high degree of autonomy. After Drummond received the report, he had to decide whether anything had to be done. Clearly, despite Nicolson's agency, he had no decision-making ability.

[37] "Appointments Committee January 1932-December 1934": 178. LONA. S957-266-2.
[38] "Appointments Committee January 1932-December 1934": 28. LONA. S957-266-2.
[39] "The Vorarlberg Question - Mr. H. Nicolson (Report No. 35)": 2. LONA. R563-11-2155-2188.
[40] "The Vorarlberg Question - Mr. H. Nicolson (Report No. 35)": 2. LONA. R563-11-2155-2188.
[41] "The Vorarlberg Question - Mr. H. Nicolson (Report No. 35)": 2. LONA. R563-11-2155-2188.

Cecil von Renthe-Fink also acted as a political watchdog and studied a dispute that was not yet submitted to the League.[42] The conflict he studied was the dispute between Poland and Lithuania in 1927 concerning Vilnius. The conflict was as a result of the war between Poland and Lithuania that formally ended in 1920. As in the case of Nicolson it is unclear whether Renthe-Fink studied this dispute on his own initiative. As the conflict about Vilnius was one that the Council had handled previously and was still interested in; the demarcation between own initiative and no initiative is not clear. There was no written order or message instructing him to study the dispute. He might have received signals or oral orders from the Secretary-General, the Council, his Director or a fourth party. Renthe-Fink had to act according to expectations from superiors and the adhere to the 'rules of the game' – he could not, of course, act completely freely. Despite not being able to choose which conflict to study, he still had a relatively high degree of agency and autonomy regarding his actions.

The report of Renthe-Fink differs from the report of Nicolson. Renthe-Fink included assessments and failed aspects of the conflict.[43] In these assessments were recommendations on which actions to take to successfully resolve the conflict. According to the formal regulations the reports of the Political Section were supposed to be an objective and neutral analysis of information. Renthe-Fink strengthened his influence on the outcome of the conflict by trying to expand his tasks and his area of responsibility. This shows his high degree of agency. Renthe-Fink did not send his report directly to Drummond, like Nicolson did. Instead, he sent it to Yotaro Sugimura.[44] A reason for this was that the structure of the Secretariat and the chain of information was firmer in 1927 than in 1919. This limited his agency and influence because Sugimura would then have to decide whether to pass it on to Drummond.

Some officials travelled to the countries in conflict to study it. One of them was Thanassis Aghnides. On the orders of Sugimura, Aghnides went to study the Hungarian-Romanian conflict at the end

[42] "The question of Vilna - Mr. von Renthe-Fink, Political Section, describes the current situation": 4-6. LONA R602-11-19704-60654.
[43] "The question of Vilna - Mr. von Renthe-Fink, Political Section, describes the current situation": 4-6. LONA R602-11-19704-60654.
[44] "The question of Vilna - Mr. von Renthe-Fink, Political Section, describes the current situation": 4-6. LONA R602-11-19704-60654.

of 1927.[45] The conflict concerned agricultural land on the border between the two countries. Aghnides was not part of a Commission of Inquiry sent by the Council and his agency was limited by the fact that he acted on orders of Sugimura. The report made by Aghnides was given to Sugimura who made a few remarks before passing it on to Drummond. The Conflict was submitted to the Council and Drummond passed the report on to the Council for further actions.[46] Neither Aghnides, Sugimura nor Drummond could decide which actions to take, but Aghnides could influence the actions taken through the selection of information.

During his trip Aghnides conducted interviews with relevant persons,[47] which had two effects on his influence and agency. The first was that he had a better opportunity to get the information that he wanted. The second effect was that he could – consciously or subconsciously – affect the opinion of the interviewed persons. Since no transcriptions of his interviews exist, this is a mere hypothesis. He also had contact with the Hungarian and Romanian governments,[48] and participated actively in the negotiations with both governments.[49] The letters sent by Aghnides to the governments were approved by Drummond. Aghnides didn't have sole responsibility for the negotiations which restricted his influence and agency. He did, however, write and receive the letters which gave him a higher degree of influence and agency.

At times the officials also went on unofficial trips to study disputes. An official doing this was Jean Daniel de Montenach. He was in Upper Silesia in 1922. The result of the plebiscite in 1921 created new minorities. According to the Geneva Convention of 15 May 1922, minority schools were to be established to help the new minorities. The dispute in 1922 concerned the fact that some did not believe that this was done in a satisfactory way. It was not submitted to the Council for resolution.[50]

[45] "Requests by the Roumanian and Hungarian Governments under Articles II of the Covenant and 239 of Treaty of Trianon - Memoranda by Mr. Aghnides.": 2-3. LONA R1834-1A-1730-1978.
[46] "Requests by the Roumanian and Hungarian Governments under Articles II of the Covenant and 239 of Treaty of Trianon - Memoranda by Mr. Aghnides.": 2-3. LONA R1834-1A-1730-1978.
[47] "Requests by the Roumanian and Hungarian Governments under Articles II of the Covenant and 239 of Treaty of Trianon - Memoranda by Mr. Aghnides.": 5 ff. LONA R1834-1A-1730-1978.
[48] "Requests by the Roumanian and Hungarian Governments under Articles II of the Covenant and 239 of Treaty of Trianon - Memoranda by Mr. Aghnides.": 2-3. LONA R1834-1A-1730-1978.
[49] "Requests by the Roumanian and Hungarian Governments under Articles II of the Covenant and 239 of Treaty of Trianon - Memoranda by Mr. Aghnides.": 5 ff. LONA R1834-1A-1730-1978.
[50] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 15. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.

Montenach was invited to come to Upper Silesia by Felix Calonder, president of the 'Mixed Commission for Upper Silesia' – who oversaw the implementation of the measures that were decided with the resolution of the conflict in 1921. Calonder wrote to Montenach personally, with hopes that it wouldn't be necessary to include Drummond to get an official from the Secretariat to Upper Silesia.[51] Further, Albert Thomas said that Montenach could join him on an already planned trip.[52] Drummond was eventually included in the process and believed that "[…] it would be a mistake for Monsieur de Montenach, as a Member of the Secretariat, to pay a visit to Upper Silesia at present time."[53] However, he couldn't decide what Montenach did as a private individual.[54]

Montenach accepted the invitation of Calonder and Thomas and went to Upper Silesia despite the discontent of Drummond. Montenach emphasized that he left as a private individual. However, the goal was to obtain information which could benefit him in the discussions of this dispute. Mantoux confirmed Montenach's trip and approved the purpose.[55] Even though Montenach wasn't an official representative of the Secretariat when in Upper Silesia; he was still a member of the Political Section and, therefore, had some degree of authority. Montenach strengthened his agency. It happened at a time when the Political Section had much difficult work. This amplified Montenach's opportunity to expand his tasks and area of responsibility.

Montenach did not get to act as he saw best fitting. He believed it would be best to encourage the minorities to submit the conflict to the Council.[56] Drummond did not see this as a suitable solution to the conflict. Therefore, Montenach had to withdraw his recommendation.[57] Drummond had the final say in these cases, which restricted the agency of the officials of the Political Section in these situations.

[51] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 4-5. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.
[52] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 2-3. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.
[53] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 7-8. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.
[54] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 7-8. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.
[55] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 18-19. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.
[56] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 2-3. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.
[57] "Protection of Minorities in Upper Silesia": 7 & 18-19. LONA R1671-41-20675-24751.

Mantoux said in a meeting of the Appointments Committee on November 27, 1922, that Montenach had "[…] rendered very good service during the Upper Silesian negotiations […]."[58] Because of this, Mantoux thought it would be fitting to promote him and give him more responsibility in the future.[59] This is an example of an official who permanently expanded his area of responsibility and his tasks by taking agency in times when the section was busy handling many conflicts. One might think that personal relations influenced the recommendation, however, the minutes from the meetings doesn't indicate this. The minutes show that the recommendation was made possible because of Montenach's competence.

This brief case study has shown that the employees of the Political Section were generally limited by the 'rules of the game' and expectations of their superiors when choosing which disputes to deal with. Further, they were limited by the geographic organisation of the section. The employees had, nonetheless, a high degree of agency relating to their actions when handling the disputes and due to the accumulated knowledge, they had of concrete situations. As the example of Montenach shows, employees could use their agency to significantly expand their area of responsibility and tasks.

Conclusion

I have shown that the Political Section was highly professionalised and that 61% of the first division employees had a background in diplomacy. This high level of professionalisation meant that it had the competence to handle political conflicts. Besides the many employees with a diplomatic background, the section had employees with other backgrounds. This expanded the section's area of expertise and made it better suited to handle different conflicts. A necessity because the section had to assist other sections in the Secretariat. This technical specialisation provided it with more influence because it was less open to political insecurities.

Aside its professionalisation the section had a high degree of national diversity among the first division employees. The high national diversity made it better suited to handle conflicts from many areas of the world. The employees handled communications with their own government or

[58] "Appointments Committee January 1922-August 1923": 275. LONA S954-263-1.
[59] "Appointments Committee January 1922-August 1923": 275. LONA S954-263-1.

governments geographically close to their home country. They also handled the disputes happening in the geographical area from where they came. Despite the section's high national diversity, it was highly Eurocentric. The article has shown how the general traits of the section were started under the first Director. They were since expanded, especially the national diversity grew during the Political Section's life span.

It has been shown which functions the section were thought to have and how it should perform its work. The section would receive information from the governments and the press of the member states. Further, it was to receive information from other sections of the Secretariat. After having received the information, the Political Section should compile a report which provided an objective and neutral analysis of the received information and give it to the Secretary-General and/or the Council or the Assembly. Even though the tasks of the section were clear, it had freedom in the way it solved these tasks.

The agency of the employees was restricted in terms of which dispute they wanted to study. Renthe-Fink and Nicolson were restricted by the fact that third parties had to supply the information. Despite not receiving orders to handle the conflicts, refusing to study a clear political conflict would have been career suicide. This enhances the limitation of their own initiative. Aghnides acted on orders of Sugimura. For Montenach the situation was more complex. He needed the invites from Calonder and Thomas. However, the fact that he was able to leave despite the discontent of Drummond shows a high degree of agency.

The employees had a high degree of agency in relation to their actions. They chose the information included in the report. Renthe-Fink shows a high degree of agency making recommendations on how to handle the conflict, thereby expanding his tasks and influence. Aghnides also had a high degree of agency; he could choose who to talk with. This influenced which information he would collect and was amplified by the fact that he was on a mission, which made his actions more independent. Montenach was restricted by the fact that Drummond had to accept his recommendations, which he didn't. Despite this Montenach had a high degree of agency. He travelled outside of the Secretariat to do his study of the dispute which gave him more freedom. Montenach is an example of how the employees could permanently expand their area of

responsibility and tasks by taking agency at a time when the section was busy. A common thing for all the employees was that they were only able to expand their degree of agency because they had the competence to do so.

Their influence on the outcome of conflicts were restricted by the fact that they did not have decision-making abilities. They could influence the outcome by selecting information. This allowed them to present any given conflict in a specific way which either gave incentives to do something or gave incentives to do nothing. As such, the ability to control information became one of the most, if not the most, important ability of the employees of the Political Section.

This analysis of the Political Section tells the story of how the League sought to solve diplomatic conflicts and how the individual employees could influence this process. This can be used to understand how diplomatic relations functioned in the Interwar Period. Gram-Skjoldager and Ikonomou (2020) traced the idea of the international civil servant from the League to the United Nations. Therefore, this study can also help us understand how diplomatic relations works in the present. Further, this analysis has shown the benefits of using a prosopographical social network analysis. Applying this actor-based approach have shown the *modus operandi* of the Section. The same approach can be applied to other areas, not only within the area of political history but in historical studies in general. The actor-based approach has not been missing from history but taking a prosopographical approach have not been explored to the fullest, and further studies with this approach will prove beneficial to the study of the League of Nations, interwar relations and our understanding of the international world both past and present.

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THE WILSONIAN TOOLBOX

The Wilsonian Arguments of the Korean Independence Movement

By:
Cecilie Plambeck-Grotum
History

ABSTRACT: Following the founding of the League of Nations and as the wave of idealism that came to be known as the Wilsonian Moment swept the planet, the Korean independence movement gathered to appeal against Japanese colonial rule. This article sets out to uncover how the idealism of Wilsonialism and the establishment of the League of Nations provided independence movements such as the Korean with a toolbox of arguments along with a platform on which to be heard. It also analyses how these arguments changed from the Koreans' initial appeal in 1919 to an attempt made in 1932 following a period of increasing conflict surrounding Japan through the 1920s and early 30s. This article demonstrates how the inspirational effect of the Wilsonian Moment and the League of Nations had profound effects on marginalized movements such as the Korean and their ability to argue their case in the world in the face of political turmoil, international crises, and global power struggles.

KEYWORDS: Korea, Korean independence movement, the Wilsonian Moment, League of Nations.

Introduction

On the afternoon of March 1, 1919, 29 men gathered at a restaurant in downtown Seoul and read a declaration of Korean Independence aloud to the unprepared passersby. This was not the first nor the last time Korean Independence had been declared, but the incident became the spark that led to months of protests and violent clashes with the Japanese colonial government. It has since become known as the March First Movement (Shin & Moon 2019: 401-402).

The March First Movement and Korean Independence efforts came at a moment in history commonly referred to as the Wilsonian Moment. On the heels of the First World War and spurred on by notions of national self-determination and 'right over might' presented in the lead up to the Peace Conference in Paris, suppressed groups across the world gathered in movements to seek justice for their cause on the newly established international stage.

This article argues that the rhetoric and reasonings used by front figures of internationalization, such as US President, Woodrow Wilson, provided colonized peoples worldwide a toolbox that could be used to argue their case and the establishment of international organizations such as the League of Nations offered an international platform to be heard.

However, as the case of Korea shows, the Wilsonian Moment, the right of self-determination and the League of Nations would turn out to be limited in its reach. While the European map was redrawn to allow for national self-determination, nations such as Korea would have to wait their turn to have its sovereignty reinstated. While the Wilsonian Moment was indeed impactful, world politics and the recent rise of Korea's colonial ruler, Japan, as a Great Power put a stop to the independence movement's progress.

The Korean movement kept fighting for its national independence from Japan until it was finally won in 1945 (Ha 2019: 7). This article presents the arguments used and the evolution of these across time from the initially idealistic appeals to the newly established League of Nations in 1919 to the disillusioned attempts to be heard in 1932. It also aims to show that, despite the idealism of internationalism, the Korean independence leaders were deeply aware of the continued dominance of the Western powers and had to play the game according to their rules.

First, however, both the Wilsonian inspiration for the movement and its arguments as well as the opposition it faced in the world order and Japan's newly acquired international influence must be understood.

The Wilsonian Moment

On January 8, 1918, American President, Woodrow Wilson, held a speech before Congress. The "Fourteen Points"-speech, as it would become known, established the president as one of the leading men of internationalism (Manela 2007: 17). His fourteen points would become foundational for the idealistic Wilsonianism that he inspired. Manela has defined the term "the Wilsonian Moment" as the introduction of internationalism and rise in anti-colonial movements that followed which would become the beginning of the end of the imperial order of the world (Manela 2007:225).

Of the fourteen points, two were particularly impactful in causing the idealistic wave of independence, anti-colonial and democratic movements to wash across the world. The fifth of Wilson's points demands that colonial claims should be reconsidered, not only based on colonial governments' claims, but on the interests of the population concerned.[1] Although Wilson would not use the term before February 1918, this point presents the idea of the national right of self-determination: the right of a population to choose what nation it belongs to. This became a key argument adopted by many of the Wilsonian movements (Manela 2007: 17).

The fourteenth point proposes a platform on which political independence and territorial integrity would be guaranteed to "great and small states alike (Wilson 1918)." This platform was to be an international association of nations formed under covenants that ensured its purpose. This platform would be established in the form of the League of Nations as a result of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919.

The right of self-determination was not afforded to many of the peoples arguing for independence. Manela argues that while Wilson never foresaw the influence he would have on colonized peoples in the world's "periphery", he was not opposed to their independence. Instead, he appears to have believed in a process of "tutelage" to bring self-government to these peoples – in time (Manela 2007: 25). Ambrosius and Akami are not as gentle in their analyses. According to Ambrosius, Wilson was strongly Eurocentric in his orientation and did not consider non-Western peoples civilized enough to self-govern (Ambrosius

[1] Woodrow Wilson, 'President Woodrow Wilson's 14 Points (1918), National Archives, 21 September 2021.

2017: 109). Akami highlights the paternalism in Wilson's and European representatives' views (Akami 2001: 21).

The Korean Independence Movement was one of many to be influenced by and to adopt the rhetoric of Wilsoniasm during the Wilsonian Moment. They would build their arguments on the principles offered by Wilson's Fourteen Points and come to view the United States as a beacon of democratic development. However, the realities of the world at the time would prove to be difficult obstacles in the march for independence.

The great powers:

The US, Great Britain, France, and Italy – and Japan?

The new international world order and the League of Nations was built on centuries of European dominance. Officially the League was meant to serve the interests of everyone worldwide. In reality it was founded by the winners of the First World War and dominated by the interests of the Great Powers (Steiner 2007: 350).

Traditionally, the Great Powers had been Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Italy, Great Britain, and to some extent the United States (Motin 2022: 138). However, following the Great War, Austria-Hungary was no more, and Germany had been defeated. While France, Great Britain, Italy and the US maintained their positions as Great Powers and would come to be known as the Council of Four during the Peace Conference, the unexpected defeat of Russia in 1905 by a unanticipated threat introduced a new Great Power to the scene: Japan.

Japan had built its international influence since the Meiji Restoration of the 1860s. With the reestablishment of imperial rule and its isolationist policy left in the past, Japan took inspiration from the Western powers in the rebuilding of their society and government, particularly in its military and imperialistic pursuits (Koga 2020: 576-578).

Japan had won the Sino-Japanese War against China, the otherwise hegemonic power of Asia, in 1895, and the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 (Koga 2020: 577). In 1902, the burgeoning imperial Japan signed the first Anglo-Japanese Alliance with Great Britain and re-established this alliance in 1905.[2] It was this

[2] *AGREEMENT OF ALLIANCE OF 1905*. (Agreement of Alliance between Japan and Great Britain, 1905, Second Anglo-Japanese Alliance).

alliance that drew Japan into the Great War on the side of the Allies. The Japanese fleet became an essential part of the fight against Germany in the oceans of East Asia and the Pacific (Burkman 2008: 4-5). As important a factor as the alliance with the British may have been, Japanese interests in German-controlled territories in Shandong, Manchuria and the Pacific played a vital role.

Allied victory in World War I secured Japan the role of a Great Power in the void left by the defeated and dissolved nations that formerly held this position. Japan became one of the Big Five Nations to lead the Peace Conference in Paris and establishment of the League of Nations (Burkman 2008: 62).

However, the war had left Japan vulnerable to foreign pressures and financially tied to the simultaneous rise of the US (Burkman 2008: 6-8). Japan's position as one of the Five was by virtue of its navy fighting on the victorious side in the Great War. While Britain, the US, France, and Italy would meet in the Council of Four during the Peace Conference, Japan would fight for the inclusion of racial equality in the League of Nations Covenant. Racial equality would safeguard Japan's new position against racially motivated discrimination and ensure better treatment of Japanese migrants abroad. However, despite majority support for the principle, Wilson himself declared the motion failed due to lack of British, American, and Australian support (Burkman 2008: 80-86). This failure demonstrates how the League of Nations would not be a full break with the status quo.

The introduction of the mandate system saw the German and Ottoman territories put under international supervision. The previous colonies and occupied territories would be under the mandate of selected Powers (namely Britain, France, South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, Belgium, and Japan). While colonized people saw the Conference as their chance to argue for liberation from colonialism, the resulting mandate system would instead institutionalize the concept of mandated tutelage: that the advanced and civilized nations of the world would be responsible for teaching the backward and weak people how to self-govern (Steiner 2007: 360).

While the Peace Conference and following League of Nations would provide the scene on which the Korean Independent Movement could argue its case, the audience casting judgement was a mix of Korea's colonizer and their allies who had other things to worry about than a small corner of East Asia and an interest in maintaining a system of the strong dominating the weak.

The Korean Question

For centuries, Korea had been a tributary state of China, but a sovereign kingdom in its own right. It remained reserved in terms of international relations even when the Chinese conducted trade with Western states and Japan actively reformed and modernized itself (Motin 2022: 132). It would be Japan that opened the then kingdom of Joseon to trade in 1876 through the Treaty of Ganghwa (Motin 2022: 141). This treaty clearly established the Korean independent statehood, stating "Chosen (Joseon) being an independent state enjoys the same sovereign rights as does Japan."[3]

Caught between Chinese, Russian, and Japanese interests, the Korean kingdom spent decades trying to secure its sovereignty, jumping from alliance to alliance with nations it deemed powerful. Thus, in 1882, Korea and the US signed a treaty of friendship and mutual assistance (Motin 2022: 142). The first Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 even stated that Japan and Great Britain was "specially interested in maintaining the independence and territorial integrity" of Korea (First Anglo-Japanese Alliance 1902).

Japan's imperial ambitions proved too great, however. Japanese interest in Korea was not only due to the potential for economic growth and extra material resources and manpower, but also strategic and military considerations (Motin 2022: 134). The Korean Peninsula was a defensive liability if controlled by an enemy power, but the bridge to a potential invasion of Manchuria in Northern China (Ha 2019: 5). Under German tutelage, Japan increased its military presence and political influence over Korea until it officially became a Japanese protectorate early in the morning on November 18, 1905 (Motin 2022: 146). Korea did not surrender its independence easily, though, with the still emperor Gojong reaching out to Germany, the US and the Second Hague Peace Conference over the following couple of years for help, claiming that the protectorate treaty had been signed in duress (Motin 2022: 146). Despite a level of distaste towards the growing Japanese influence in East Asia, the appeals of the emperor went unanswered by the Western powers and in August 1910, Korea was officially annexed and made a Japanese colony (Ku 2021: 52).

[3] *Treaty of Peace and Friendship Between the Empire of Japan and the Kingdom of Corea*, 1876, Article I.

The colonial period was marked by assimilation policies. The goal of the Japanese leadership was to turn Koreans into Japanese (Seth 2016: 158). The first decade of colonial rule was a decade of violence and militant suppression of the Korean people. Korean nationalists were arrested and tortured, Korean citizens discriminated against based on their ethnicity and the March First Movement itself resulted in violent clashes with Japanese authorities (Seth 2016: 158-160). However, the movement resulted in a policy shift towards the so-called "cultural policy".

The era of cultural policy" lasted through the 1920s and saw some restrictions on speech lifted. At the same time, surveillance and police presence was increased (Seth 2016: 161). Despite some violent protests throughout the 1920s, the decade of cultural policy was largely peaceful. However, following Japan's expansion into Northern China in the Manchurian Incident in 1931 and increased militarism as well as an increase in violent attacks by Korean nationalists and communists led to almost 15 years of much harsher assimilation policies than in the 1910s (Seth 2016:163-165).

Due to the strict Japanese control of Korean nationalists, many of the independence efforts was conducted by Koreans abroad. Following the March First Movement, a Provisional Government was formed in April 1919 and would operate out of Shanghai (Seth 2016: 160). Chosen to lead the government was Rhee Syngman, a highly educated Korean-American and a personal friend of President Wilson (Fields 2019: 54-55). Rhee was only one of many American-educated Koreans who would lead the Independence Movement and would eventually become the first president of the Republic of Korea.

Another American-educated Korean was Kim Kyusik, a Princeton-graduate. As the provisional secretary of foreign affairs, Kim was chosen to represent Korea and present an appeal for independence at the Peace Conference in Paris (Roanoke College 2019). This would become one of many, as Korean Associations from across the world would continue to appeal to the League of Nations and the eventual Secretary General, Eric Drummond.

The Wilsonian toolbox

The Claim for Korean Independence was submitted to the Peace Conference in April 1919. Copies were also sent by letter in May the same year to British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, and US President Wilson by Kim Kyusik.

The 11-page appeal details Korea's historical independence, Japanese transgressions and abuse of power and a warning against the threat of Japanese imperialist intentions. The appeal is infused with Wilsonian idealism, referring directly to Wilson's Fourteen Points in its introduction:

> The Conference meets in order to secure a settlement of the affairs of the member nations in terms of the principles set forth in President Wilson's Fourteen Points. The 'evident principle' running through the 'whole program' is defined by the President in his message to Congress on January 8, 1918, as 'the principle of justice to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 1).'

In the effort to argue for Korean Independence, three overall categories of arguments become apparent:

1) The Legal Argument
2) The Right of Self-determination
3) *Japan Contra Mundum*

The legal argument

The first category, the legal argument, is the foundation of the claim, but would also only be truly viable at the prospect of a fair and equal international system judging the claim based on the interests of the population concerned, in this case the Korean people.

The argument draws on multiple treaties from the end of the 19th and early 20th century. The Korean claim is that Japan has broken multiple of these treaties by annexing Korea.

According to the claimants, Korean independence and sovereignty had been legally established on multiple occasions and by multiple parties. Japan recognized Korean sovereignty and independence in the Treaty of Ganghwa of 1876 and again in the Treaty of Defensive and Offensive Alliance of

1904, the US in the treaty of 1882, China in the Treaty of Shimonoseki in 1895, Great Britain in both the First Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 and in an otherwise unspecified treaty of peace and commerce with Korea itself (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 2).

The Anglo-Japanese Alliance was especially important to the claimants, who states:

> The independence of Korea, which was expressly recognised in the first Anglo-Japanese agreement, was significantly omitted in this renewal of the alliance.
>
> This sinister omission was quickly followed, twenty days later, by the conclusion of the Treaty subjecting Korea to the protectorate of Japan. It is safe to say that this transaction is with-out parallel in civilized history (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 2).

Incidentally, this is the closest the Korean claimants would get to accusing another great power than Japan of transgressing against legal documents and sacrificing Korean independent statehood.
The pointed finger quickly turned back to Japan when the appeal accuses the empire of colonizing only for the benefit of Japan itself:

> It is also well to remember that 'most of these reforms, valuable as they are, may be found in a well-regulated penal colony' (c) and that all of them have been effected or introduced at the expense of the Korean taxpayer **in the interest and for the benefit of the Japanese Settler** for whom the Japanese Authorities desire to make Korea an attractive field of colonisation (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 6).

It is important to note that the formatting of the above quote is as found in the original document, suggesting that the words in bold text held significant weight to the writers.
As a contrast to Japanese colonial policy, British rule of India and US control of the Philippines is described as the type of paternalistic tutelage through which strong nations would teach the weak how to self-govern (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 7). While the Korean claimants appear to have supported this type of system, at least in so far that it is beneficial for their argument, the intentions of Japan are described as less than noble: "Except in the sense that cattle or slaves must

be taken care of if they are to be of value to their owner, the welfare of the Korean People is not an aim of government with Japan (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 7)."

In other words: Japan had not only violated treaties, but also transgressed against the single acceptable reason to dominate another nation. Therefor the international society should declare the nullification of the annexation treaty.

The Right of Self-Determination

The right of self-determination was a key aspect of the Wilsonian Moment and resulting movements, and while the term itself is never directly used in the claim, the principle is clearly foundational for the appeal. As such, the document highlights the historic and cultural unity of the Korean people:

> The Korean people were a nation, with a language and a culture of their own, before Japan ceased to be a land of warring tribes and unlettered people.
>
> (…)
>
> This nationhood of the Korean People had lasted for more than 4,200 years when Japan consummated her work in Korea by the Treaty of August 22, 1910. And save for an intervening period when their liberties were assailed, the Koreans lived through these forty-two centuries as an independent nation, their country forming one of the separate states of Asia (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 1).

However, the appeal claims, the Japanese government was guilty of severe abuse of power in its attempts to assimilate the Korean people into Japan and removing all traces of a separate Korean cultural identity and history:

> The teaching of Korean history is prohibited. And imprisonment, torture, banishment or worse might be the penalty if some Korean should be tempted to recite to children of the soil a traditional story or song or some folklore telling how men fought and died for Korea in other days (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 4).

Another important aspect of the right of self-determination is the opinion and interests of the people. The appeal states that Japan did not have Korean interests at heart, but also that "Against this extinction of Korean sovereignty and the incorporation of their country as a province of Japan, the Korean People and Nation have strenuously protested and do still protest (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 3)."

This brings us to the third and curious argument that is found throughout the appeal: Japan was like Prussia – only worse.

Japan Contra Mundum

Under the headline "*Japan Contra Mundum*", Japan Against the World, the appeal states:

> In addition to these reasons connected directly with the fate of the Korean People, the vital interests of the world – particularly the Asiatic interests of France as well as the Asiatic and Pacific interests of Great Britain and the United States – demand the dis-annexation of Korea and the liberation of her People from Japan (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 7).

In a twist against the idealism of a new world order based on equality and fairness, this category of argumentation clearly presents the Korean Independence Movement's world view: the United States, Great Britain, and France, as the only powers greater than Japan with their own interests in Asia and the Pacific, would be the only nations strong enough to and interested in stopping Japanese expansion. To stoke the fire, the Korean claim sought to present Japan as the greatest threat to these nations and their interests.

Not only was Japan expanding into Korea, they claim, by hindering trade and missionary work, Japan sought to "EXCLUDE FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN FAR ASIA" as the claim states in bold and capital letters (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 7).

It would not end there, though, as according to the Korean claimants, Japan would pose a danger to the non-Japanese world, especially "the three Latina and Anglo-Saxon Powers" through their "continental policy":

> This policy aims, first, at the seizure of the hegemony of Asia through the **Domination and Control of the Man-Power and the "Natural Resources " of China**—possible only by the Japanese possession of the continental point d'appui of Korea—and, next, at **the Mastery of the Pacific Ocean as the sole means of forcing an entrance for Japanese emigrants into the rich lands of the Australias and the Pacific Seaboard of the United States** (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 7).

To make the threat of Japan even clearer to the Western Powers, the claimants draw on Western frames of reference by drawing direct comparisons between Japan and Prussia.

Under the headline that simply says “Prussia and Japan”, the following comparison between the two nations is made:

> Like Prussia in her two wars against Austria and against France, Japan "prepared" for her two wars against China and against Russia; and as Prussia became the leading military Power in Europe, so Japan has become the leading military Power in Asia as a result of her "defensive" wars against the two countries that stood in the path of her continental ambitions. And in quite a true sense, it may be said that Prussia and Japan are the two modern Powers which have profited greatly from the business of war.
>
> If there be any difference between these two predatory Powers, the same lies in the deeper immorality of Japan (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 2).

To truly underline the importance of aiding Korea and stopping Japan, the appeal warns that the continental policy was in fact only the first step of an even larger goal inspired by the Prussian tutelage under which Japan modernized its military:

Japan was building towards a policy of world domination (The Claim of the Korean People 1919: 10).

The Wilsonian Disappointment

13 years after the establishment of the League of Nations and the Claim for Korean Independence, the general secretary of the League, Eric Drummond, would receive another 11-page document. This time it

was a petition by letter dated to November 14, 1932, and signed by Doo Ok Chung and Henry Cu Kim of the Korean National Information Bureau operating out of Hawaii.

Whereas the Korean appeal of 1919 had been written in the midst of the idealistic Wilsonian Moment and with great hopes for the future of internationalism, this letter was written in a time of crisis. In September 1931, in response to reports of a bomb exploding on the Southern Manchurian railway, Japan launched an invasion of Manchuria. Within days China had filed an appeal with the League of Nations, turning the local incident into an international issue (Burkman 2008: 166-167).

The League's conclusion to the incident would prove disastrous. Unable to agree on sanctions or condemnations, the League simply ordered Japan to leave Manchuria and Japan refused (Steiner 2007: 743). Instead, Japan began the process of withdrawal and officially withdrew its membership of the League in 1935 (Burkman 2008: 173-175).

The multiple unanswered appeals for liberation, concurrent intensification of the colonial assimilation policies in Korea, and recently the apparent proof that the Korean Independence Movement's warnings of the Japanese threat had been correct led to a great deal of frustration and disillusionment with the idealism of the Wilsonian Moment. This is evident from Chung and Kim's rhetoric:

> The Korean question was always avoided by European and American statesmen because they had the wrong conception of the political situation of the Far East through the influence of Japan's diplomacy and publicity (Kim & Chung 1932, 2-3).

In the place of Wilsonian ideals is cold security politics: Japan's expansion must be stopped as it is a threat to every other nation's interests in Asia and the Pacific. According to Kim and Chung:

> Korea is the Belgium of Asia and as a close neighbor to China and Russia she will be needed in securing the sacred cause of peace in the Orient by restoring the impendence and the territorial integrity of Korea. Korea's appeal not only merits but demands the earnest consideration of the League Council (Kim & Chung 1932: 5).

While the long and independent history of Korea is emphasized, the argument based on the right of self-determination is set aside in favor of argumentation based on international security and the interests of

the Great Powers. The *Japan Contra Mundum* argument has clearly become the primary focus of the petition.

A legal argument is also used by Kim and Chung, although it takes a different form than the one used in the claim of 1919. The petition refers to documents dating back to the 19th century in which other nations pledge their support to Korea in the case that it should be unjustly oppressed by other powers:

> In 1882 the United States of America pledged to Korea her good office by President Arthur, Great Britain in 1885, Italy in 1884, Germany in 1884, Russia in 1885, France in 1884, Austria in 1892, China in 1899, Belgium in 1901, Denmark in 1902, each deliberately covenanted with Korea, that 'if others deal unjustly and oppressively with either Government, the other will exert their good offices on being informed of the case to bring about an amicable arrangement (Kim & Chung 1932: 6).'

In response to a hypothetical counter argument that "the absorption of Korea by the Empire of Japan be a fait accompli, and therefor beyond your consideration", the writers state that "no such act is ever final, when the result is oppression or breach of treaty covenants." This statement is followed by historical examples to prove their point:

> History supplies us with many illustrations of this inexorable truth, of which Poland, Greece, Finland, Bohemia and others are examplars. The conscience of the world sustains the cause of such people, and its peace is imperilled until justice hears and responds to their appeals (Kim & Chung 1932: 6).

While Kim and Chung only directly accuses the European and American powers of ignoring the question of Korea once, the entire petition is heavy with insinuated allegations of passivity and hypocrisy by the League of Nations and United States. They state that it is "high time for serious thought on the part of the Powers, when there is yet time" and, referring to attacks on Chinese civilians in Shanghai by Japan, ask very pointedly: "Could this (be) a justified act of a member of the League of Nations (Kim & Chung 1932: 2)?" If the League intends to return Manchuria to China, Kim and Chung writes, the same principle "must be applied to Korea if they are to be applied at all (Kim & Chung 1932: 5)."

The petitioners end their letting by presenting a solution to the threat from Japan against the rest of the world. However, gone is the trust in Wilsonian ideals and tone of subservience:

> Korea does not ask for her country's improvement; she demands the exercise of those treaty covenants with other nations upon which she has a right to rely for her protection. The fate of Korea may befall China, unless the present tendency of Japanese imperial expansion in Manchuria is checkmated either by China herself or by a concerted action of the League of Nations and the United States of America in the Eastern theatre of international politics (Kim & Chung 1932: 11).

No longer a case of idealism and the hope of national self-determination, the Korean Question was now a matter of international peace and security. A matter that demanded the action of international society.

Conclusion:

The principles attributed to President Wilson in the time of the Peace Conference following the First World War would not only become foundational for the creation of the League of Nations. The principles of national self-determination and the equality of nations inspired colonized peoples across the world to fight for their freedom and independence. The establishment of the League of Nations was believed to usher in a new era of internationalism, fairness and inclusion.

One of the many groups to be inspired by the Wilsonian Moment and the ideas it presented was the Independence Movement in Korea. After a decade of Japanese colonial rule, young Koreans sought together and turned to the League of Nations for aid in 1919.

The first appeal of this young movement and the men who led it was laced with idealism. The Wilsonian principle of national right of self-determination was a central part of their argument. Referring to the centuries old Joseon-dynasty, the Korean movement-leaders disputed the Japanese right to annex the kingdom and accused the colonial regime of violating the Korean people's right to its own culture.

Making use of the newly formed League of Nations, an international platform on which international legal claims could be handled, the Koreans argued that Japan's actions violated international law and

ethics. Finishing their appeal for independence, the Koreans warned the World's nations of the threat the Japanese imperial intentions posed.

The right of self-determination, the legal argument and the warning against Japan's threat to the world were all made possible by the League of Nations and Wilsonian Moment. Wilsonianism offered the inspiration and ideological foundation; the League provided the movement with a platform on which to argue its case and an audience with the ability to respond.

However, the League did not respond to the Koreans' appeal. Consequently, they kept trying. Following a string of perceived violations against Chinese sovereignty by Japan and the League's ineffective response, the 1932 letter sent by members of the Korean movement to the general secretary of the League of Nations clearly shows the disappointment they felt.

While the right of national self-determination is still present in the letter's arguments, the idealism of 1919 is almost entirely replaced by appeals to the Western Power's own interests and warnings of Japanese expansion, yet it is also tinged with barely veiled accusations against these same Powers of inaction and consequently culpability in Japan's violations.

The weight of the arguments of self-determination, legality and the threat of Japan changed from the time of the 1919 appeal to the 1932 letter due to developments like Japanese expansionism, the League's inability to successfully respond to it, and the desperation felt by the Koreans as Japanese colonial rule became more restrictive over time. However, the fact remains that these arguments were central to the Korean Independence Movement's case in both 1919 and 1932 and all were the result of the Wilsonian Moment, the idealism it sparked, and the international platform offered by the League of Nation.

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RAJCHMAN AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS' HEALTH INTERVENTION IN GREECE

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History

ABSTRACT: This article offers insights into the development and implementation strategies of the League's health intervention in Greece. The first part uses Ludwik Rajchman, medical director of the League of Nations, as an analytical prism. It explores his active involvement, how he drew on a mainstream approach to social hygiene and how he recruited expertise globally. It is also argues that Rajchman likely drew inspiration from Australian hospital systems, which he studied in preparation for the intervention. The second part highlights the deliberate emphasis on technical aspects of the intervention for diplomatic reasons. Seeking funding from the Rockefeller Foundation, Rajchman aimed to portray the intervention as a technical rather than political endeavor. Moreover, emphasizing the technical nature of Rajchman's team allowed for presenting its efforts as noninvasive with respect to Greek sovereignty, positioning the intervention as a continuation of Greek government initiatives.

KEYWORDS: League of Nations, Rajchman, Greece, health, technocratic

Introduction

In October 1928, the League of Nations was asked for assistance in restructuring Greece's public health service. The request was prompted by a significant influx of refugees into the country. Between 1912 and 1922, Greece was involved in three successive wars: the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), World War One (officially from 1917-1918), and the Greco-Turkish War (1919-1922). Refugees from the Ottoman Empire began arriving in Greece during the Balkan Wars and continued to do so throughout WW1. However, it was during and immediately after the Greco-Turkish War that a large number, estimated at 1.5 million refugees, arrived in the country. While approximately 1 million refugees arrived during the war, an additional wave was triggered by a consequential convention on the compulsory exchange of populations signed during the peace negotiations. This convention mandated the resettlement of Greek Orthodox Turkish nationals from Eastern Thrace and Asia Minor to Greece, while Muslims in Greece (with few exceptions) were to relocate to Turkey. It was signed following Greece's defeat by the Turks in 1922 – but should be distinguished from the primary peace treaty of Lausanne in 1923, which superseded the Treaty of Sèvres signed by the Allied powers and the Ottoman Empire in 1920 (Renée, 2003: 3-5). While many of the refugees shared a language and national identity with the local population, there were also Turkish-speaking groups among them, as well as a significant percentage who faced communication difficulties due to dialects (Kontogiorgi, 2006: 165-180). The massive influx of refugees brought about social, economic, and health upheavals, prompting the League of Nations to organize loans to assist with their settlement.

Historian Jamie Martin (2022:1-28), who has studied the birth of international economic assistance, contends that it was controversial to accept international assistance in the interwar period. Martin emphasizes that ideas of national self- determination were highly influential at the time. Moreover, the aftermath of the First World War had left a trail of instances where powerful nations had violated the sovereignty of weaker nations in pursuit of power and profits. The League of Nations' reform of Greece's public health system, while not primarily an economic intervention, would have entailed an extensive endeavor, granting the League considerable influence over Greece's national health policies. This influence could be seen a challenge to Greek

sovereignty. It is worth noting that the League had previously involved itself in health-related assistance to Greece during the refugee crisis, with its Malaria Commission advising Greek authorities on a worsening malaria situation in 1924, and its Health Section providing guidance on a Dengue fever epidemic in 1928 (Gardikas, 2018: 184, 307).1 Nevertheless, these previous interventions would be dwarfed by an intervention to reorganize Greece's public health system.

Furthermore, the call for such reorganization came amidst a turbulent period in Greek politics. The early interwar years witnessed the temporary abolition of the Greek monarchy (1924) and a short-lived military dictatorship (1925-1926). Political dynamics were marked by heightened tensions between Venizelism, which largely advocated Greek republicanism, and a conservative, predominantly royalist opposition (Martin, 2022: 140-141). Moreover, the League's final proposal for the reorganization was put forth in April 1929, just a few months before the Wall Street Crash that triggered the Great Depression. This economic downturn led to a significant decline in tobacco prices and subsequent political turmoil in Greece (Theodorou and Karakatsani, 2008: 53-75; Mazower, 1991: 116-120). The initiation of the intervention into Greek health administration thus occurred at an intriguing moment in history. The Greek request for assistance followed a period of political unrest, and the Great Depression lay just around the corner. Ideas of self-determination were highly influential, and a long period of war had just ended, resulting in a massive influx of refugees.

The first part of this article is interested in how the recommendations to reorganize Greece's public health service took shape. It puts a specific spin on this overarching interest by using the League's Medical Director, Ludwik Rajchman, as an analytical lens.[2] It looks at Rajchman's interactions with colleagues and major stakeholders, as well as his interactions with important medical practices of the time. It is argued that Rajchman was enthusiastically engaged in the intervention and had a profound impact on it. At the same time, Rajchman was himself influenced both by a form of preventative hygiene and a transnational, multi- stakeholder style of medicine.

[1] See Also *Epidemic of Dengue, 1928 - Various correspondence*, 1928.
[2] On using biography to explore societal themes, see Kessler-Harris (2009: 625-630). On biography as a tool to study international organizations, see Ikonomou (2020); Reinalda (2020: 15-32).

The second part of the article is interested in what strategies were used to move the proposed intervention towards becoming reality. It analyses the League's final recommendations, as well as an application for funds written by Rajchman. It has a specific interest in technocratic internationalism, which as described by historians Johan Schot and Vincent Lagendijk (2008: 196-217) is an ideology that includes a preference for separating technical issues from political ones in international cooperation. This article posits that the League sought to portray the intervention as a technical endeavor rather than a political one, aligning with the principles of technocratic internationalism. Rajchman strategically emphasized the technical aspects of the intervention to ease relations with the primary financier, the Rockefeller Foundation, and to appease stakeholders within Greece. The League sought to downplay concerns regarding Greece's political sovereignty, while planning for a significant intervention in its health policies.

In previous research, some of the most ambitious studies on the League's intervention in Greece have held long term perspectives (Borowy, 2009; Macfadyen, 2014); although some shorter-term perspectives exist as well (Giannuli, 1998; Theodorou & Karakatsani, 2008). This article refines the short-term perspectives by treating the creation of the intervention (in 1928-1929) as a moment in history. Rajchman is used as a biographical prism for understanding the League's intervention, building upon previous biographical works on Rajchman's life (Balinska, 1998; Woltanowski, Wincewicz, and Sulkowski, 2018: 1-7).[3] His socialist pathos and the connotations of his Polish origins has been described in detail in health science researcher, biographer, and great granddaughter Marta A. Balinska's work, and will not be central themes in this article, which focuses more on Rajchman's interplay with medical ideas – as it relates to the intervention in Greece. It should also be noted that David Macfadyen (2014: 84-104) disputes Rajchman's importance for the intervention in Greece – claiming that one of his employees – Melville Mackenzie was the driving force behind it. Furthermore, Rajchman by no means operated alone in Greece. The League's Health committee, while relying on Rajchman and his team for information – had a profound influence on the intervention. Its chairman, Thorvald Madsen, visited Athens as preparation for the intervention. The League also provided economic assistance to Greece through

[3] Works on Rajchman's life tend to rely heavily on Balinska's biography, see for example *Pasteur Institute* (http://webext.pasteur.fr); *IO- BIO* (www.ru.nl/politicologie/io-bio).

its Economic and Financial Section (directed by Author Salter); and parallel health- related assistance through its Malaria Commission. All source material was gathered from the League of Nations Archive hosted by the United Nations in Geneva.[4]

Analysis

Background

In early 1929, the League of Nations Health Section formed a research group of health experts, headed by Rajchman. Arriving in Greece on the 25th of January 1929, the group carried out a field survey studying Greece's economic resources, demographic profile, medical services and sanitary conditions. Results were submitted to the League of Nation's Health Committee which used it as a basis for its final proposal for the reorganization effort, delivered to the Greek government on April 18th. This proposal was called "Collaboration with the Greek Government in the Sanitary Re-Organization of Greece" but will henceforth be called the report.[5]

This document critiques Greece's old health services for having been unable to prevent what is seen as preventable diseases: malaria tuberculosis, enteric fever and dysentery. It also contains critique of hospitals, medical universities, and the proportion of professional roles in the system. Hospitals are described as badly equipped, badly constructed and overcrowded with patients. Medical universities are described as being unable to produce officers that live up to modern standards of curative or preventative medicine. And the profession as a whole is described as overcrowded with doctors but lacking in nurses, health visitors and well-trained midwives. The report recommends that rather than expanding upon Greece's present health services – a new health service should be built. Great emphasis is put on centralization of this new service. It is suggested that a new technical center should be built in Athens with specializations in multiple areas and a school of hygiene (with the ability to train personnel in other areas). The report also

[4] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929; *Greek Public Health Service – Documentation*, 1929; *Collaboration of the Rockfeller [sic] Foundation*, 1929; *Rajchman, (Dr) Ludwik, W*, 1921-1939; *Explanatory Memorandum on the Documentation Collected by the commission, Together With a Subject Index*, 1929; *Hospital and health Survey of Athens and Pireaus*, 1929.
[5] "Collaboration with the Greek Government in the Sanitary Re-Organization of Greece" in *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929

recommends centralizing the health administration, rather than it being distributed over several ministries. Apart from an emphasis on centralization, the report also suggests creating a committee to study how Greek sanitary legislation could be altered as to harmonize with the report's recommendation. It also makes economic assessments of costs; and it stresses the importance of philanthropic contributions to health services. Thus, the recommendations are extensive enough to go beyond medicine, into areas of political administration and sanitary legislation as well as discussing the economy of the intervention.[6]

Rajchman's Freedoms and Constraints

The League of Nations Health Organization had many parts – a Health Committee, a Health Section, a Health Bureau and a General Advisory Council. Rajchman was hired by the League in 1921 as the director of the Health Section. This section officially answered to the Health Committee (where Rajchman was a member as well) but should be understood as a relatively autonomous unit through which Rajchman made a substantial impact on the League's health activities (Gram-Skjoldager & Ikonomou, 2021: 31-50; Ranshofen-Wertheimer, 1945: 120-123). Towards the end of 1929 – the same year as the creation of the intervention in Greece – Secretary-General Eric Drummond wrote in a confidential evaluation about Rajchman: "I consider it mainly due to him that the Health Organization plays such a preeminent part in League activities".[7] Rajchman also acted as the Health Organization's connection to the Rockefeller foundation, which funded a substantial amount of its activities (providing over $2 million between 1922 and 1934) (Weindling, 1997: 269-281). By the time the intervention came around (in 1929) the Section's finances were in good order. Drummond had noted in 1926 and 1927 that the Health Section's finances needed Rajchman's "personal attention".[8] But in 1928 he wrote instead that he wished to congratulate Rajchman on the "financial organization of the [Health] Section".[9] It would also be Rajchman who wrote an application to the Rockefeller foundation in order to fund the intervention in Greece. Balinska (1991: 456-465) has argued that Rajchman was an odd

[6] *Explanatory Memorandum on the Documentation Collected by the commission, Together With a Subject Index*, 1929, p 21; *Arrangements for a survey of Greece,* 1929.
[7] "Copy of annual report", 29 nov 1929 in *Rajchman, (Dr) Ludwik, W*, 1921-1939
[8] "Annual reports, Dr.Lw.Rajchman, Director, Health Section", 1926-1927 in *Rajchman, (Dr) Ludwik, W*, 1921-1939.
[9] "Annual report, Dr.Lw.Rajchman, Director, Health Section", 1928 in *Rajchman, (Dr) Ludwik, W*, 1921-1939.

choice as Director of the Health Section, since he held socialist sympathizes. Yet Rajchman's personnel file reveals that his socialist background was not the only objection to him. Rajchman was neither French nor British – and British authorities seem to have had concerns about him not belonging to the second category. An internal (unsigned) letter in the secretariat suggests sending word out that under no circumstances would the Secretariat appoint anyone of British or French nationality – so as to clear away "British" objections to Rajchman.[10] Rajchman also seems to have enjoyed the support of his superior, Drummond, who continuously gave him good evaluations (short and positive). It was not until tensions arose between him and the second Secretary-General, Josef Avenol, that his position was threatened: Avenol terminated his contract in 1939. But this was ten years after the intervention was put together (and still made Rajchman the longest serving Director in the Secretariat).[11]

Rajchman's Involvement

The many letters found in the League of Nations Archive indicate that Rajchman was actively and enthusiastically involved in the intervention. In these letters, Rajchman can be seen actively shaping the intervention, inviting experts to be part of it, setting up meetings with people involved in the survey, prioritizing among health goals in the vicinity, applying for funds to the Rockefeller Foundation, arranging accommodation and other travel details for his colleagues; as well as communicating his own travel plans to the Greek Under-Secretary for Hygiene, Apostolos Doxiadis. As concrete examples of this, one can mention a telegram that communicated how Rajchman had decided a Malaria Survey in Macedonia was not desirable. One could also mention two letters where he invited C.L. Park of the Australia Public Health Organization and B. Borcic, head of the Zagreb School of Hygiene to join the project; and a telegram where he set up a two-day meeting with Haven Emerson, a professor at the University of Columbia who was on his way to Athens; as well as a letter where Rajchman decided on a replacement for an important

[10] Letter, unknown author to Monnet, 6 Aug 1921 in *Rajchman, (Dr) Ludwik, W*, 1921-1939.
[11] "Annual reports, Dr.Lw.Rajchman, Director, Health Section"; "Contract", 1 Nov 1921; Internal document "The Treasurer. The Internal Control Officer. The Chief Accountant", 27 Jan 1939. All documents are from the folder *Rajchman, (Dr) Ludwik, W*, 1921-1939.

participant (Lumsden, an American doctor) who had been in an accident. There are also letters and telegrams that mention how Rajchman booked a hotel in Athens for Thorvald Madsen, chairman of the League of Nations health committee; arranged a trip to the same city for Gorge Buchanan of the Health Committee; and communicated his own travel plans to Doxiadis (the health minister of Greece). Furthermore, a letter from Emerson to Buchanan indicate that other people were anticipating relying on Rajchman. The letter describes how Emerson and Buchanan could expect to rely on "a good deal of information" from Rajchman, who was already in Greece as they were traveling there.[12]

Perhaps even more interestingly, a letter from Buchanan to Rajchman hints at Rajchman's enthusiasm for the project. At an early stage of the project, Buchanan attempted to curb Rajchman's quick response to Greece's request, warning him that the health committee cannot be expected to "run wherever it is whistled to".[13] He writes:

> It is too easy to imagine cases in which, for purely political and temporary reasons and not on the medical merits, a Health Department or its Minister, or even a Cabinet, might find it convenient to ask for the intervention of the Health Organization merely to give cover or to buttress up some project which ought to be settled by the national Government itself.[14]

Buchanan wanted the Council of the League to make sure that Greece's request was a matter of medical technocracy, rather than a form of national politics. He feared Rajchman was running too quick with the request, thus not allowing the Council to make sure that this was the case. Furthermore, Rajchman had previously been involved in the League's intervention on Dengue Fever in Greece. The prime minister of Greece, Eleftherios Venizelos – took the time to thank the Medical Director (Rajcman) for this previous work and specifically mention that it was the

[12] Several letters and telegrams: Letter Rajchman to Borcic, 17 Jan 1929; Letter Rajchman to Park, 3 Nov. 1928; Telegram, Rajchman to Emerson, 8 Feb. 1929; Telegram, Rajchman to Cumming, 31 Jan 1929; Telegram Rajchman to Madsen 25 March 1929; Letter Rajchman to Buchanan Mar 1929; Letter, Rajchman to Doxiadis 11 Feb. 1929; Letter, Emerson to Buchanan till 28 jan 1929, in *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929.
[13] Letter, Buchanan to Rajchman 20th Nov. 1928, in *Arrangements for a survey of Greece,* 1929.
[14] Ibid.

Director and his experts "previous engagement" with Greece that led to Greece's invitation of assistance.[15]

Considering communication preserved between Rajchman and various stakeholders, this article posits that Rajchman was deeply and enthusiastically involved in the creation of the League's intervention into Greece's public health service.[16]

Health Internationalism

While the previous section presented signs of Rajchman's agency and engagement in the intervention; this section takes a contextualizing approach – indicating ways in which Rajchman's attitudes towards health internationalism line up with two major types of medical practice. One the one hand, they line up with the multi-stakeholder nature of international health interventions in the interwar period; and on the other hand, they line up with the preventative nature of social hygiene.

The intervention in Greece featured an aspect of national and organizational multiplicity. This can be seen in the team Rajchman put together, the stakeholders he negotiated with and the ideas and models he used as inspiration. Rajchman (himself of Polish origins), brought together competences from a variety of nations and medical organizations. Though he hardly did this without outside influence, Rajchman staffed the survey group with Haven Emerson, a professor at the University of Columbia, Allen McLaughlin of the U.S.A. Health Organization, C.L. Park of the Australia Public Health Organization, B. Borcic, head of the Zagreb School of Hygiene and M.D. Mackenzie, an American doctor at the League of Nations. Furthermore, letters preserved in the League's archive show how Rajchman communicated with both the prime minister of Greece and the Rockefeller Foundation, a private philanthropic organization. He also asked that Mackenzie should be allowed to study at the Rockefeller Foundation as preparation for the survey,

[15] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929.
[16] Theodorou and Karakatsani (2008: 53-75) also describe Rajchman as having considerable influence in the intervention.

and asked Park to send acts from the Australian national health services which he could study for himself.[17]

Extracts from these Australian health service acts have been preserved and archived, and these contain some similarities to ideas in the report. The extracts highlight three systems operating in Australia: one Victorian, one Tasmanian and one from Queensland. Both the Australian hospital acts and the report stress the importance of maternity care as well as philanthropic contributions to the healthcare system. While the authors of the Australian acts write that "The necessity to provide for a Maternity Service in any hospital system is recognized"; the report notes that "The welfare of mothers and infants is often capable of great improvement". Extracts from the Australian acts also describe it as a "defect" in the Queensland and Tasmanian system – that these do not encourage "philanthropic persons" to devote their time to the work of hospital boards. The report recommends giving support to "societies" which out of "philanthropic motives" contribute to "public utility". The Victorian system is described as the most successful one in the Australian acts. It is described as a highly differentiated hospital system that focuses skills on metropolitan hospitals. The report on the intervention in Greece also contains an idea of centralizing skills, in this case to one specific metropolitan area – Athens. It suggests establishing an "Athens Center". This center would give instructions to services in other regions; provide advice to "central and local authorities" and contain specializations in several areas and train "the future medical officers of the Permanent Hellenic Health Service".[18] However, even with these similarities, it remains challenging to determine the precise extent to which Rajchman drew inspiration from the acts and how much of that inspiration materialized into concrete suggestions in the report. Additionally, there are sections within the acts that do not bear any resemblance to the recommendations put forth in the report. For example, the Australian acts are more concerned with sourcing finances in a variety of ways than the report is. What seems safe to say is that Rajchman sought to bring together ideas and models from different nations, arenas and organizations as he attempted to

[17] Minutes, "Extracts from the minutes of the meeting of the 55:th session of the council June 1929", in *Greek Public Health Service – Documentation*, 1929; Collaboration of the Rockfeller [sic] Foundation, 1929; Letters, Park to Rajchman, 31 Dec. 1928; Rajchman to Gunn 18 Dec. 1928, in *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929.
[18] "Extracts from Hospital Acts and Reports Emanating from Australia"; Collaboration with the Greek Government in the Sanitary Re-Organization of Greece". Both documents are found in *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929

organize a viable health intervention. The team he built, the stakeholders he communicated with and the fact that he studied the Australian hospital acts – are all signs of this. Historian Sunil Amrith (2017: 245-264) has argued that the intertwining of national and international, public and private organizations was a major characteristic of international health policy in the first half of the twentieth century. Amrith describes how the Rockefeller Foundation brought together disparate groups of doctors, missionaries and humanitarians in support of its work, even while relying on the support of imperial and national states. Amrith also argues that this was not unlike how other international health organizations worked, such as The Red Cross and the Office International d'Hygiene Publique. Seen in this light, the national and organizational multiplicity of Rajchman's attempt at health internationalism fit in with how other international health organizations have been described as operating in the interwar period.

The intervention in Greece also seems to have been influenced by the preventative and government centered attitudes of social hygiene. While not studying the intervention in Greece specifically, Balinska (1991: 456-465) sees Rajchman as a revolutionary force in international medicine. She has argued that Rajchman invented a form of broad preventative healthcare – which included housing – and that he did so based on his socialist ideals. The report does in fact contain a very broad perspective on health, stressing the importance of preventative measures. It calls for the improvement of Greece's "Public water supplies, sewerage, good roads and paving, public baths, parks and recreation grounds, facilities for sport, means of communication, construction of healthy houses, factories and schools, public lighting, town-development planning". The report also suggests that the Athens Center get a "Division of Hygiene and Preventive Medicine" as well as a "Division of Sanitary Engineering".[19] However, Rajchman was not unique – even within the League – in supporting broad preventative health measures. Mackenzie, a colleague who lacked Rajchman's socialist background, explicitly criticizes Greece's medical personnel as being to a great extent "ignorant of modern preventative medicine". He describes Greece's incapacity to secure good "water supplies", "sewage" and "communications".[20] Mackenzie's attitudes indicates that some of Rajchman's attitudes to prevention were not as unique as they have been described by

[19] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929.
[20] *Explanatory Memorandum on the Documentation Collected by the commission, Together With a Subject Index*, 1929, p21; On the plurality social hygienes, see Porter & Porter (1988: 90–106).

Balinska – and could be arrived at from other vantage points than a socialist one.[21] As far as Rajchman was interested in securing external conditions of health, he can be thought of as influenced by a form of social hygiene rather than pure socialism. Nickolas Rose (1993: 283-299) has described how politicians from many different ideological backgrounds supported versions of social hygiene in order to make sense of health interventionism. He has argued that while many types of social hygiene existed, there were two major state- sponsored versions in the early twentieth century. The first attempted to improve external conditions of health through town planning, sewage systems, anti- filth campaigns and the like. The second strand, so called eugenics, sought to improve upon perceived biological traits in the nation's population. It seems the intervention in Greece lines up with the first major strand of social hygiene, in that it aimed to secure external conditions of health.

The first part of this article has argued that Rajchman was enthusiastically involved in the creation of the intervention into Greece's public health system and played a significant part in shaping it. The intervention was deeply influenced by Rajchman's attitudes towards the global multiplicity of international health work, as well as his and Mackenzie's attitudes towards preventative hygiene. These attitudes were broadly present in health governance at the time.

Technocratic Internationalism

While an influential individual, Rajchman did not act in a bureaucratic or diplomatic vacuum. The following part of this article discusses strategies in the report and in Rajchman's negotiations, seemingly intended soften relations with stakeholders and move the planned intervention towards becoming a reality. Previous research by historians Vassiliki Theodorou and Despina Karakatsani (2008: 53-75) has attempted to map out tensions between Greek politicians on the one hand and Thorvald Madsen and Rajchman on the other hand. They have also described tensions between the Greek Medical Association and League-appointed health experts, as well as between liberal and conservative politicians within Greece. In the following two sections, rather than focusing

[21] MacKenzie seems to have largely avoided clear public expressions of ideology, although Springings (2008: 120-121) describes him as having an aversion to social ideology.

exclusively on conflict, emphasis is put on how the report was formulated in ways that were likely to help mediate stakeholder tensions. Using Schot and Lagendijk's (2008: 196-217) understanding of technocratic internationalism, it is argued that the report attempts to present itself as technical in opposition the political – and that Rajchman used this presentation to soften relations with the Rockefeller Foundation, as well as potential critics within Greece.

The Technical vs. the Political

In Rajchman's application for funds sent to the Rockefeller Foundation, he emphasized the intervention's "technical nature".[22] This attempt to define the intervention as technical was backed up by the report itself, which had been sent to the foundation beforehand. The report accentuates the intervention's technical properties in two main ways. First of all, explicitly, and secondly, by repeatedly using the term technical to define the properties of all the main nuts and bolts in its recommendations.

The explicit effort to define the intervention as technical was formulated as follows: "We consider it an indispensable condition for the working of a modern and effective health service that it should be fully protected from political influences; such a service ought to be a purely technical service".[23] Note that the technical is here defined as separate from the political.

Thereafter, the message that the intervention would be technical is reinforced a multitude of times in the report through the repeated use of the term 'technical', which is one of the most central and commonly used terms that appear in the text. The survey is described as a "technical survey", the new central "technical services" are recommended to have a "technical" head – the authority of which should in fact be "technical". Likewise, the direction of the malarologist, the sanitary engineer and the professor of pharmacology are also described as "technical". In general experts are in the text referred as "technical experts"; instructors are "technical instructors"; public health

[22] Collaboration of the Rockfeller [sic] Foundation, 1929.

[23] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece, 1929*, 7.

advisors are "technical health advisors". General staff is referred to as "technical staff" and equipment is referred to as "technical equipment".[24] Ironically the text contains no specialized medical vocabulary. Instead, the term technical is only used to define the different parts of the intervention program as belonging to a technical realm, thus a realm that has been predefined as separate from the political.

Towards the end of the report – the document returns to a more explicit method of signaling technical properties. The Greek Prime Minister is quoted stressing the technical nature of the intervention; officially requesting the League's "technical assistance".[25]

Having sent this report to the Rockefeller Foundation, Rajchman was arguably armed with a thoroughly expressed claim to the realm of the nonpolitical. Making sure that the foundation notes the claim, Rajchman quotes the Greek prime minister's request for technical assistance in his application for funds (which as mentioned also figures in the report already sent). After this Rajchman also explicitly writes himself that the intervention into Greek Public Health Service will be of a "strictly technical nature".[26]

The early interwar period was a tumultuous time for Greek politics. A good reason for defining the intervention as technical was – as the document states – to have it last across shifting Greek political landscapes. However, Rajchman was attempting to pitch the intervention to an American philanthropic foundation: the Rockefeller Foundation. Historian Ludovic Tournès (2022), has studied American philanthropic foundations in the interwar period and argues that these foundations generally belonged to US internationalist circles and should be understood as a counterweight to traditional US isolationism. He also argues that the Rockefeller Foundation had a specific vision of internationalism which was based on governing global issues through scientific ventures – rather than political ones.[27] In this situation, Rajchman's claim to a nonpolitical

[24] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929, 7.
[25] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929, 20.
[26] *Collaboration of the Rockefeller [sic] Foundation*, 1929
[27] Tournès describes this as a general tendency among American philanthropic foundations. These foundations did not want to get involved in political decision making, but aimed to stimulate the growth of what was seen as technical activities.

intervention may have been important to soften relations with the Rockefeller Foundation, by emphasizing aspects of the intervention that harmonized with the foundation's vision of internationalism.

Emphasizing the technical aspects of the intervention may also have been a strategy to avoid tensions with Greek stakeholders. The report claims that the survey was done to "…form a happy consummation of the studies already made by the Greek authorities".[28] Thus, it describes a continuation between Greece's own technical studies and the technical enquires headed by Rajchman. Martin (2022:1-28) argues that a state in the interwar period which allowed large scale intervention into matters classically understood as belonging to national politics could be seen as relinquishing part of its sovereignty. He asks: "In a profoundly unequal world, how could a sovereign state open its internal affairs to outside intervention without admitting to a loss of status, power and autonomy?" Martin is interested in international economic assistance. Yet the League's health intervention could certainly be considered large scale as well. It was the first time in history an international organization had attempted a health intervention extensive enough to reconstruct not only a nation's health policies, but also related health administration and sanitary law. The intervention touched upon a whole branch of society. Defining the intervention as technical- as opposed to political may have been a strategy to ease or preempt concerns about an intervention scheme which could be understood as infringing on Greek political sovereignty.

Conclusion

This article has studied the League of Nation's intervention into the Greek public health service in 1928-1929. The article contributes insights to how an individual, Rajchman, became an important bridge between ideas in global health governance and the League's reform recommendations. Communication preserved between Rajchman and various stakeholders indicate that he was enthusiastically involved in the intervention and played a central part in shaping it. The intervention was deeply influenced by his attitudes towards the global multiplicity of international health work. Rajchman drew competence from three different continents and studied Australian hospital acts himself before commencing a survey into Greece's health service.

[28] *Arrangements for a survey of Greece*, 1929, 1-2.

Furthermore, both Rajchman and his colleague Mackenzie were highly influenced by the preventative attitudes of social hygiene. Preventative attitudes towards medicine were broadly present in central and northern European health governance at the time, spanning the ideological spectrum – but the survey lead by Rajchman indicated that it was largely absent in Greek medicine.

This article has also contributed insights to what role the ideology of technocratic internationalism played in the intervention. It is argued that the League's reform recommendations contained strategies to emphasize the intervention's technical status – for diplomatic reasons. These strategies can be understood as based on the ideology of technocratic internationalism. The report explicitly defines the intervention as technical in opposition to political, and then repeatedly reminds the reader of its technical status through the abundant use of the term technical – to describe all the nuts and bolts of the intervention. This emphasis is likely to have been important in order to soften relations with the Rockefeller Foundation, where Rajchman was applying for finances. The foundation held a vision of internationalism based on an ideal of the technical health aid. Additionally, defining the intervention as nonpolitical may have been a strategy to ease tensions with Greek stakeholders such as politicians, civil servants and the Greek medical corps. The survey headed by Rajchman was presented as a happy consummation of technical studies already commenced by the Greek government. To use a medical term, it was presented as noninvasive. This was in spite of the unprecedented scale of the intervention, which would affect a whole branch of society – and was written in a context were self-determination and national sovereignty were highly influential political concepts.

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STAFFING THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE

The Influence of Nationality in Recruitments to the League of Nations Secretariat, 1922-1930

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Historie

ABSTRACT: This article examines how nationality influenced recruitment of the highest-ranking officials to three of the smaller, political sections in the League of Nations Secretariat during the organization's most successful years between 1922 and 1930. From three, separate case-studies, it is shown that although the official policies favored the hiring of nationals from underrepresented member states, other factors such as the individual section's autonomy and policy field further complicated the process of finding the right nationals for vacant positions. This meant that the established protocols for recruitment were oftentimes ignored or circumvented in attempts to guarantee the most suitable candidates.

KEYWORDS: League of Nations Secretariat, Recruitment, Nationality, Governance

Introduction

In April 1917 shortly before the United States' entry into the First World War, President Woodrow Wilson famously proclaimed that "The world must be made safe for democracy".[1] While the main intention behind this statement was to justify entering the war on the side of the Allies, it also reflected desires for a different post-war international order. Already in 1916, Wilson had shared his visions of a new era in global political cooperation which was to be spearheaded by a novel international organization with peacekeeping as its central objective (Mazower 2012: 122). Three years later these visions turned into reality at the Versailles Peace Conference with the formal establishment of the League of Nations.

The League of Nations organization came to be structured around three, institutional units: Two of these units, the Council, and the Assembly, were to be comprised of delegates representing their own nation. Whereas the Council's only permanent delegates represented the great powers post-WW1 (Britain, France, Italy, and Japan), the Assembly was structured as a parliament with representatives from all League member states. The Assembly was meant to be the driving force behind the League's activities with the Council providing the direction for its work (Walters 1952: 43-65). The third unit, named as the "Secretariat" in the official covenant, was, however, fundamentally different in its role, composition and capabilities compared with the Council and the Assembly. It was the only permanent body within the League institution and was responsible for administrative tasks in relation to the Assembly and the Council's work. Known as the world's first international civil service, the League Secretariat consisted of employees from different member states which, importantly, were employed to serve the institution rather than their home country.

Despite its employees serving the institution rather than following national interests, the Secretariat's national composition was still deemed important by the League's member states and the leaders of the Secretariat itself. This article highlights the importance of the Secretariat's composition of nationalities by investigating the process of recruitment to the League Secretariat.

1 Cited from *President Wilson's Joint Address to Congress, Leading to a Declaration of War against Germany*, April 2nd, 1917; Records of the United States Senate; Record Group 46; National Archives.

For many years following the dissolvement of the organization in 1946, the League Secretariat received little, scholarly attention. Up until 1950 there were a couple noteworthy publications by former employees within the League institution.[2] In the four succeeding decades the League of Nations was deemed above all else as a failed, international security experiment. It was not until the transnational turn in the 1990's that scholars developed curiosity for exploring institutional and practical workings of the League institution and its Secretariat during its fruitful years. Recently, the institutional set-up, administration, and practices of the League institution have come to the forefront of research. Scholars have increasingly shown interest in core, foundational elements of the League.[3]

The source materiel analyzed in this article describes the workings of the League Secretariat's Appointments Committee (AC); a sub-body of the Secretariat established in 1922 with the purpose of assisting and advising the Secretary General on recruitments to the Secretariat. By investigating an extensive collection of minutes which document the meetings of the AC between 1922 and 1930, I aim to explore how the aspect of nationality affected, constrained, and guided recruitment of the highest-ranking employees known as First Division Officials to the League Secretariat. It is important to note that the latter was not comprised as one, collective entity but was instead subdivided in several different, functionally specialized subsections. Therefore, the analysis of this article is separated into three parts, each covering recruitment to three, political sections of the Secretariat: The Disarmament Section, the Minorities Section and the Mandates Section. I focus on appointments for these sections during arguably the League's heyday between 1922 and 1930, where

[2] See for instance Ranshofen-Wertheimer, Egon, *The International Secretariat: A Great Experiment in International Administration*, (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1945) and F. P. Walters, *A History of the League of Nations* (London: OUP, 1952).

3 A couple mentions here are Klaas Dykmann, "How International was the Secretariat of the League of Nations?", *The International Historical Review 37*, no. 4 (2015): 721-744 and Karen Gram-Skjoldager & Haakon A. Ikonomou, "The Construction of the League of Nations Secretariat. Formative Practices of Autonomy and Legitimacy in International Organizations", *The International Historical Review 41*, no. 2 (2019): 257-279 and Karen Gram-Skjoldager, Karen, Haakon A. Ikonomou, and Torsten Kahlert, "Scandinavians and the League of Nations Secretariat, 1919-1946", *Scandinavian Journal of History 44*, no. 4 (2019): 454-483.

the onset of the Great Depression gradually resulted in a more hostile environment for international policymaking.[4]

Establishing protocols for bureaucratic recruitment (1919-1922)

Before answering the main questions of this article, I consider it necessary to first provide a brief sketch of the evolution in bureaucratic recruitment during the first years of the League's existence. Although recruitment practices were dynamic and continued to develop throughout the organization's lifespan, it was during these early years that the ruleset for recruitment to the Secretariat were put in place. By mid-1922, the AC had been formerly established similarly to the protocols on which it was to evaluate candidates for vacant posts in the International Civil Service.

The creation of the League and early recruitment

The Permanent Secretariat was not given much attention by the League's founders during the process of creating its Covenant. A set of notes included in the British Draft Convention contained a proposal with suggestions on how the "Secretary-General" should be able to choose his staff of secretaries (Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1945: 42-43). Neither this nor other early proposals ended up eventually being included in the organization's foundational document. On the matter of the internal administration of staff, the Covenant simply stated that "The secretaries and staff of the Secretariat shall be appointed by the Secretary-General with the approval of the Council" (Walters 1952: 46-47). The primary authority in staff appointments was therefore initially put solely in the hands of the Secretary-General. Though the Council became equipped with the power of vetoing candidates, this never ended up as a huge constrain on recruitment to the organization. Many officials started working in the Secretariat before their appointment had acquired the Council's final approval (Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1945: 42-43).

4 For a more detailed account of the interwar-period and the consequences of the Great Depression on international politics, see Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History 1919-1933* (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

With the absence of any *a priori* bureaucratic procedures for recruitment and given absolute authority to appoint whoever he saw fit, a large responsibility was put on the first Secretary-General, Eric Drummond, to shape the organization for the future. The former British Diplomat envisioned the League Secretariat as a truly *international* Civil Service where the officials would commit themselves to serve the institution rather than their own nation. In his view, the sections within the Secretariat should also not be structured around nationality but around different policy areas. Still, Drummond regarded the composition of nationalities in the Secretariat as important. While the composition of his early staff in mid-1919 included mostly citizens of Northern Europe, he was prepared to oversee appointments to each Section going forward to safeguard the right proportions of nationals (Gram-Skjoldager & Ikonomou 2019: 260-263).

The early recruitment decisions in 1919 and 1920 to the Secretariat made by Drummond have rightfully been characterized by scholars as "unbureaucratic" in nature.[5] The evolution towards a bureaucratization and formalization of recruitment practices was sparked initially by dissatisfaction in the Assembly over the absence of competitive examinations. As a result, an agreement was reached within the 4th Committee of the First Assembly in November 1920 in which the Secretary-General accepted to set up a body which could assist him in selecting and appointing his staff. This culminated in the creation of the Staff Committee which turned into the Appointments Committee (AC) in January 1922. The AC's role was to assist the Secretary-General in all matters regarding appointments, promotion, and discharge of staff to and within the League Secretariat. Its members had to possess the rank of director at minimum and were chosen solely by the Secretary-General himself (Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1945: 318-319). Although Drummond still had the final word in matters of staff administration, the AC guided his decision-making while ensuring both institutional and national backing for candidates.

5 For an example of early, non-bureaucratic recruitment to the League Secretariat see Haakon A. Ikonomou, "He used to give me Turkish lessons in Constantinople': How to Get a Job in the League Secretariat," in *The League of Nations, Perspectives from the Present*, eds. Haakon A. Ikonomou & Karen Gram-Skjoldager (Aarhus University Press, 2019), 113-123.

The issue of national representation

When national delegates made a proposal for competitive examinations in 1920, their wish for wider and more adequate, national representation had not yet been clearly articulated. Nevertheless, the proposal ended up as the precursor for a later discussion which uncovered more deep-rooted issues of inequality between member states. When the Assembly gathered the following year in 1921, staunch attacks were launched by the Indian delegation targeted at the disproportionate, national representation in the Secretariat. It was exposed how Britain, France, and Switzerland benefitted economically from the institution as the salaries to officials of their nation far exceeded the amount which they contributed to the League's budget. On the contrary, many of the smaller non-European nations had few or even no citizens working in the Secretariat despite contributing financially to the organization. This led these nations to demand equality in representation between Western European and non-Western European nations. This proposal, which essentially entailed equality in rights and influence between Western European and non-Western European member states, could by no means be adopted in the eyes of Secretary-General Eric Drummond. Following his dismissal of the challenge to European political and cultural superiority, he went as far as to guarantee the smaller members a gradual progression towards wider national representation in the Secretariat (Gram-Skjoldager & Ikonomou 2019: 265-268).

The first indication of this promise is found when comparing the two editions of the Staff Regulations from 1921 and 1922 respectively. In the 1921 edition it is stated that the Staff Committee would "endeavor to reconcile the requirements of efficiency, economy and the international character of the Secretariat".[6] The Civil Service's "international character" is only mentioned as one of three aspects of importance, which does not indicate a particular emphasis on this aspect relative to the other two. The smaller member states' call for equality in representation prompted an amendment to this clause in the following year's edition. Unlike the edition of 1921,

6 Staff Regulations 1st Edition, Geneva, 1 June 1921.

the June 1922 edition clearly states that "special regard shall be had to the maintenance and development of the international character of the organization."[7]

Furthermore, the 1922-edition emphasizes that in the case of candidates possessing equal qualifications "preference shall be given to a candidate whose nationality is not adequately represented in the staff." Although the smaller member states had not managed to secure full equality in representation from a budgetary perspective, they had been successful in causing notable changes to the protocol for recruitment in favor of lesser-represented nations. Still, the importance of nationality in staff questions was, for practical reasons, mostly limited to First Division staff members, as these employees held the biggest responsibilities for the work in their respective sections (Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1945: 354-364).

In the upcoming section of this article, recruitment cases of First Division members will be discussed, since it was the recruitment of these higher-ranking officials that prompted more careful considerations by the AC. In the following, it will be investigated how the internationalization principle, as well as other concerns related to nationality, were considered and acted upon by the committee during its first eight years of existence. I will start off with the section of the Secretariat which was given responsibility for what was deemed the League's most important task by its founder and contemporaries: collective security.

7 Staff Regulations 1st Edition, Geneva, 1 June 1922.

The Disarmament Section

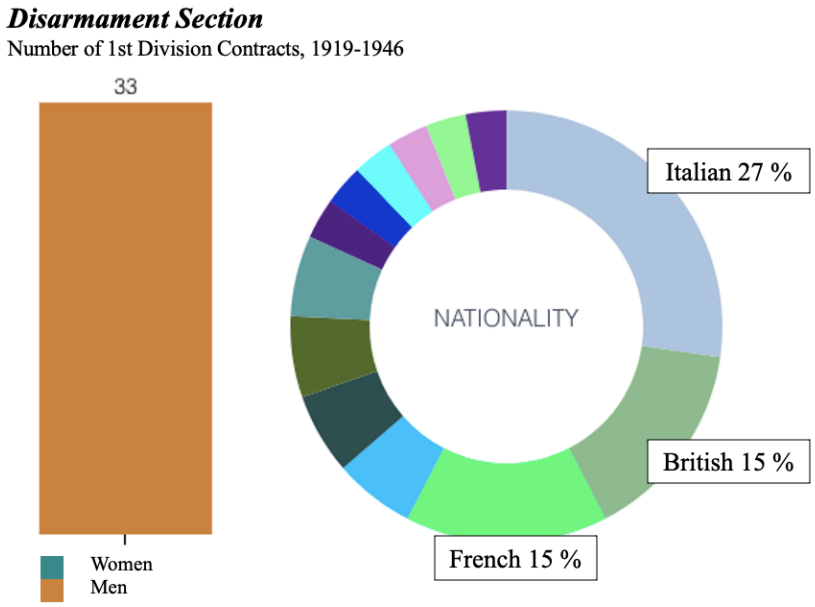

Fig. 1 Disarmament Section. Statistics and Visualizations: Haakon A. Ikonomou, Yuan Chen, Obaida Hanteer, Jonas Tilsted "Visualizing the League of Nations Secretariat - a Digital Research Tool" (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2023)

From its very creation, the maintenance of world peace had been designated as the League's most important task. Intrinsically linked with this objective was the notion of disarmament. Article eight of the Covenant stated that there could be no long-lasting peace without the "reduction in national armaments to the lowest point consistent with national safety" (Walters 1952: 48). It was therefore only natural that the League Secretariat should have a section devoted to the policy area of disarmament. Given the huge importance attributed to this issue, one might have expected the Disarmament Section in the Secretariat to become highly influential for the disarmament process. This, however, did not end up happening. For the Great Powers, the issue of disarmament was a sensitive policy field, and they did not wish to cede any autonomy to an International Civil Service. As a result, the Disarmament Section ended up becoming by far the least politically autonomous section of the Secretariat (Ikonomou 2021: 321-334).

It made little sense for the powerful League-members like Britain and France to keep a large representation in the Disarmament Section when any disarmament policies would be decided in their national governments rather than the League Secretariat. Therefore, the demand of the Great

Powers for full national autonomy on disarmament policies ended up creating room for citizens of smaller powers to obtain leading positions in the Disarmament Section. All three of the section's directors throughout its lifespan were citizens of smaller powers, including the first Chief (and eventually Director) of Section, Salvador de Madariaga. During a discussion of his appointment at an AC meeting in the fall of 1922, Drummond stated that he considered the hiring of the Spaniard a good thing "from a political point of view", since he had been "continually receiving requests from Spain for the appointment of one of their nationality as director".[8] As noted by the Secretary General, it was fortunate that "the man best suited for the job had happened to be from Spain", since this made the appointment align with the objective of giving Spain a more adequate representation in the Secretariat.[9] Granting a leading role in the Disarmament Section to a citizen of a smaller and ex-neutral member state would appear as a significant action towards strengthening the Secretariat's international character.

Thus, while Great Power citizens were outside the considerations when new directors had to be hired for the Disarmament Section, the options could still be plentiful and difficult to decide for Drummond and the AC. This was especially the case in 1930 following the previous Norwegian Director Eric Colban's resignation.[10] One of the applicants for the vacant directorship at the time was the Greek jurist and longtime Secretariat official, Thanassis Aghnides. In his application letter to Drummond, Aghnides explicitly argues for his own suitability to the post from a nationality perspective; Greece is underrepresented in the League's "most important organs" relative to countries of "lesser political importance".[11] From his long time serving in the Secretariat, Aghnides appears to have been perfectly aware of what and how national considerations influenced recruitment to a post such as the director of the Disarmament Section. His inside knowledge of the institution was undoubtedly part of what landed him the job in mid-1930.

[8] It was common for national governments to put forward their own candidates to the League Secretariat. For a discussion about this form of recruitment and to what extend it was practiced from the context of Scandinavian officials working in the Secretariat, see Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomou & Kahlert, "Scandinavians", 454-483.
[9] S954-1, Minutes, 8th AC-Meeting, June 27th, 1922.
[10] S956-2, Minutes, 3rd AC-Meeting, March 4th, 1930.
[11] LONA-700 – Personnel File, Thanassis Aghnides

It turns out that the First Division staff in the Disarmament Section was not only comprised by citizens of smaller League member states. The unique circumstances surrounding the section and its work even permitted an ex-Russian émigré to play a substantial role in its limited contributions to the disarmament scheme. The native-Ukrainian lawyer, Nokhem Sloutzki, became associated with the League Secretariat for the first time in 1921 when working for a few months in the Economic and Financial Section. Following a brief hiatus, he was hired to the Secretariat once again in 1922, this time as a statistician for the Disarmament Section. Due to being formally of Russian nationality, he was ineligible to obtain a permanent contract until 1934 when the USSR joined the League of Nations. In the years prior he was kept on temporary contracts for one to two years at a time. According to Madariaga, his first boss in the Disarmament Section, these temporary appointments caused Sloutzki "considerable anxiety".[12] Nevertheless, Sloutzki stayed with the section throughout these years to the satisfaction of the Spanish director. AC member and Under Secretary General, Bernardo Attolico, also appears to have been relieved when he could report to the AC in 1925 that Sloutzki had rejected a job proposal from the International Labour Organization in favor of staying with the League Secretariat.[13]

The reoccurring contract "renewals" handed out to Sloutzki is indicative of an employee whose work was highly valued. Much of the reason for this was the ex-Russian's contribution to the section's most important work. Throughout its publication history, Sloutzki was the chief editor of the *Armaments Year-Book*, a statistical data collection of national armaments published on a yearly basis (Lincove 2018: 507). In a section drained of political influence the yearbook became a way for the Disarmament Section to facilitate disarmament talks by providing public available information on armaments, a pledge initially agreed to by the member states and included in Article Eight of the Covenant (Walters 1952: 48). With this in mind it is easy to understand the desire to continually renew Sloutzki's temporary contract despite the fact that this circumvented the established protocols prohibiting citizens of non-member states to be permanently employed in Secretariat.

[12] S955-1, Minutes, 10th AC-Meeting, November 20th, 1925.
[13] LONA-S883 – Personnel File, Nokhem Sloutzki.

Sloutzki's long "temporary" affiliation is also indicative of a section with relatively loose nationality-specific constrains on recruitment. As mentioned earlier, the directorship was reserved for citizens of smaller member states. Although this did constrain recruitment to a certain extent, it also provided the opportunity to satisfy national governments and to work towards adequate national representation in the Secretariat as a whole. With most of the political section's work ending up as information dissemination, it allowed room for special cases of employment outside the institutionalized norms, which is illustrated by Nokhem Sloutzki's employment.

The Minorities Section

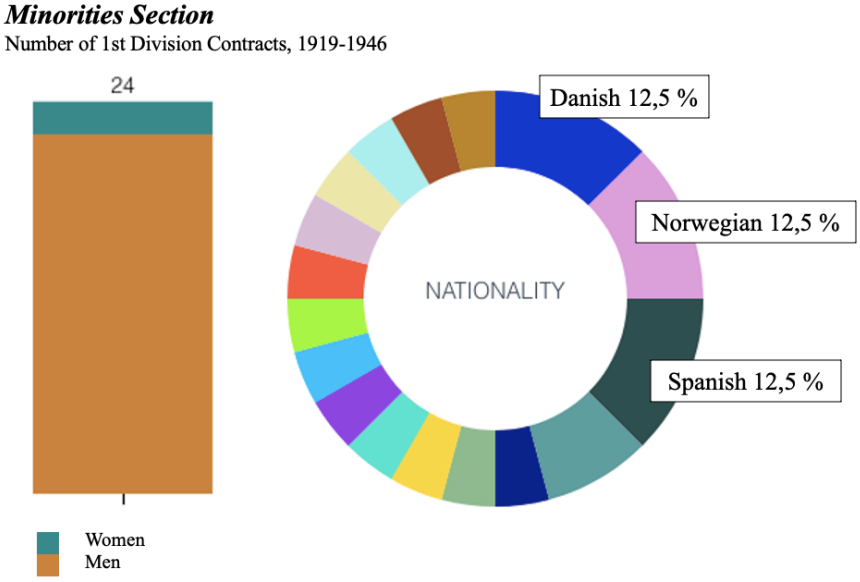

Fig. 2 Minorities Section. Statistics and Visualizations: Haakon A. Ikonomou, Yuan Chen, Obaida Hanteer, Jonas Tilsted "Visualizing the League of Nations Secretariat - a Digital Research Tool" (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2023)

Whereas the Disarmament Section had been deliberately exhausted by The Great Powers of most of its political room for initiative, it was a different story for the Minorities Section. The Covenant itself did not initially prescribe minority protection as one of the League's responsibilities. Instead, it was the peace treaties conducted after the First World War by the victors with certain nation states of Eastern Europe which brought the complications of national minority protection within the League's sphere of work. In these treaties, clauses were inserted that guaranteed the protection of national minorities within specific Eastern European States (Azcárate 1945: 92-101). The League was given the role of guarding the rights of these minorities and would effectively act as a broker in

disagreements over the issue (Mazower 1997: 47-63). As the only year-round permanent body of the League organization, the Secretariat – and more specifically the Minorities Section – naturally ended up performing different tasks associated with this responsibility. The administrative work in the section was centered around the petition system; national minorities had the opportunity to send in complaints in case their rights had been violated. These petitions would then be assessed by the Minorities Section with regards to whether the case was to be discussed by the Council or referred to the Permanent Court of Justice in Hague.[14]

In comparison to the Disarmament Section, the Minorities Section was granted much more autonomy by the Great Powers. A big reason for this was the unilateral enforcement of the minority protection policy; only specific Eastern European countries were subject to international oversight and the inherent violation of national sovereignty it entailed, while the Great Powers had no formal obligations regarding their own minority groups.[15] The staff in the Minorities Section amounted to 11 contracted officials in 1922 compared to 12 in the Disarmament Section. The Scandinavian influence in the Minorities section was also evident at this early stage. In 1922, three Scandinavian officials (two Norwegians and one Dane) worked in the section, including the Norwegian Director of Section, Erik Andreas Colban (1876-1956).[16] Consistency was a key descriptor for the Minorities Section under Drummond, a fact underlined by the recruitment patterns of the Section's personnel; five out of eleven officials from the Section in 1922 were still a part of its staff more than ten years later in 1933.[17]

One of these long-lasting officials in the section was the Spanish lawyer Pablo de Azcárate.[18] Azcárate was hired to the section in the fall of 1922 and his appointment provides an interesting case study for multiple reasons. Firstly, Azcárate ended up working in the section for almost 15 years, and during the last three he possessed the highest position as director. Secondly, his appointment to the

[14] As pointed out by Mazower, the petition system often failed to properly address offenders of minority rights, although there were notable success stories, such as the way in which the Aaland Islands dispute between Sweden and Finland was solved in 1921. Mazower, "Minorities", 47–56.
[15] Mazower, "Minorities", 52–56.
[16] For more information about the Scandinavian presence in the League Secretariat, see Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomou & Kahlert, "Scandinavians", 454-483.
[17]"LoN Administrative and Minorities Section," LONSEA, accessed May 17th, 2022, http://www.lonsea.de/pub/org/1207.
[18] "Pablo de Azcárate," LONSEA, accessed May 17th, 2022. http://www.lonsea.de/pub/person/5041.

Minorities section was one of the earliest ones concluded in the wake of the republished Staff Regulations in 1922 which, as mentioned earlier, shifted the priorities for recruitment to clearly favor candidates of non-adequately represented nations.[19] In this regard, Azcárate's appointment did not follow the intentions behind the newly adopted regulations, since Spain was already adequately represented in the Secretariat at the time.[20]

Colban did what he could to reassure the AC of his hard attempts to find other suitable candidates. The Norwegians' interest to hire the Spaniard to the vacant post in the section was not initially shared by the other committee members. The Italian committee member, Bernardo Attolico, wanted to appoint a South American, and Eric Drummond had also been against hiring a Spaniard due to Spain's already adequate representation in the Secretariat. The Secretary General eventually agreed to Colban's proposal for practical reasons; the workload in the section was "daily increasing", and the candidate was "entirely suitable" in every aspect but nationality.[21] The case shows that while it was the committee's intention to give utmost priority to the newly adopted nationality principle, compromises on this front were inevitable to maintain a well-functioning secretariat.

This was a complicated issue, however. The inherently sensitive nature of "sovereignty governance" in minority protection required the AC to grant the aspect of nationality additional consideration when hiring to the Minorities section. This first becomes evident in 1922 when Attolico proposed that a South African should be chosen to fill up a vacant post in the Minorities section. Although hiring a South African was desirable from an adequate representation standpoint, Colban was concerned that "a man of non-European nationality would not be likely to understand the minorities questions or be conversant with them."[22]

This shows Colban's view of how the importance of being familiar with Eastern Europe and their minority groups necessitated a specific national background. In practical terms, this would make it

[19] LONA-R1460 – Staff Regulations 1st Edition, Geneva, 1 June 1922.
[20] It was the recently conducted contract with Salvador de Madariaga as Chief of the Disarmament Section which at the time put Spain in the category of adequately represented nations, thus problematizing the appointment of another Spanish member of the Secretariat. (S954-1, Minutes, 10th AC-Meeting, August 3rd, 1922).
[21] S954-1, Minutes, 11th AC-Meeting, August 24th, 1922.
[22] S954-1, Minutes, 10th AC-Meeting, August 3rd, 1922.

difficult to align recruitment to the section with the established principle of working towards adequate national representation in the secretariat. While European candidates were preferable to non-Europeans in the section, this did not actually comprise *all* European nationals which is evident from the fact that no French, German, Central or Eastern European officials were ever hired to work in the section. It was assumed that a citizen from these countries regardless of individual morals or qualifications would be too personally invested in the matter.[23]

Another appointment issue arose in late 1927 when a new director of the Minorities Section had to be appointed following Colban's relocation to the Disarmament Section. During this recruitment process the aspect of nationality was similarly important to how it had been in 1922. An Argentinian delegate was quick to request that an Argentinian should be chosen for the vacant post, a proposal which was unanimously declined by the AC. Not only had progress been made recently to satisfy Argentina's claims for adequate representation in the Secretariat; Drummond was also certain about the dissatisfaction of both governments and minorities in the case of a non-European director.[24] Drummond's suspicion indicates that nationality-preferences were held not only in the AC but also among national governments and minorities.

Returning to the vacant post of director in 1927, the Committee members unanimously agreed to the preferability of appointing a European, though they did not share similar views when it came to the specific European nationality of the candidate. Committee member Joseph Avenol repeatedly expressed that he himself believed personal qualifications of candidates should be deemed of higher importance than nationality, since the AC's task would otherwise be "considerably complicated". For Colban, who knew the job from personal experience, there could be no doubt about the importance of the new director's nationality. Drummond himself was likely also aware of the complicated political role that the directorship entailed which is indicated by his initial selection of possible candidates. These were all citizens of ex-neutral and non-invested countries (three Swedish,

[23] Karen Gram-Skjoldager & Haakon A. Ikonomou, "Making Sense of the League of Nations Secretariat – Historiographical and Conceptual Reflections on Early International Public Administration," *European History Quarterly* 49, no. 3 (2019): 420-444.
[24] S956-1, Minutes, 15th AC-Meeting, December 16th, 1927.

one Swiss, and one Belgian candidate).[25] Just like in 1922, the choice ultimately feel out in favor of a Spaniard when Manuel Aguirre de Cárcer was chosen for the post in 1928.[26]

From these two cases of recruitment, it becomes clear that the AC's recruitment considerations were heavily influenced by the aspect of nationality when it concerned the Minorities Section. Although the Staff Regulations of 1922 had introduced adequate national representation as an important guiding principle in recruitment other considerations were typically of higher importance when recruiting to the Minorities section. The biggest challenge was to find candidates from nations who possessed enough insights into the delicate matters of minority populations in Eastern Europe. Therefore, candidates from ex-neutral countries of Western Europe, who weren't politically invested in the region nor the scheme, were preferable as opposed to other European and non-European candidates.

The Mandates Section

Unlike the Minorities Section which possessed a significant degree of autonomy, the Mandates Section was not itself charged with any of it. Instead, this section's role was to serve the Permanent Mandates Commission (PMC) in secretarial matters. The PMC was responsible for oversight with the Mandate System; the administration by certain former allied victor states over 14 different territories as laid out by Article 22 of the League Covenant (Walters 1952: 56-58). Some of these were former colonies of the defeated Central Powers while others were parts of now dissolved empires such as the Ottoman Empire. Essentially the system was an attempt by The Great Powers to align their aspirations for the continuation of empire with 20th century liberal internationalism. This was done by promising the mandated peoples of an indefinite path towards self-rule and by involving the League machinery. The PMC was to examine annual report on the mandated territories sent in by the mandatory powers. In addition, a petition system would be established similarly to the one existing for minority protection (Mazower 2012: 165-173). The Mandates Section's tasks included communication with governments of mandatory powers and monthly

[25] S956-1, Minutes, 1st AC-Meeting, January 19th, 1928.
[26] "Manuel Aguirre de Cárcer," LONSEA, accessed January 25th, 2023.

information exchange with the PMC about petitions and the state of the mandated areas overall (Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1945: 116-117).

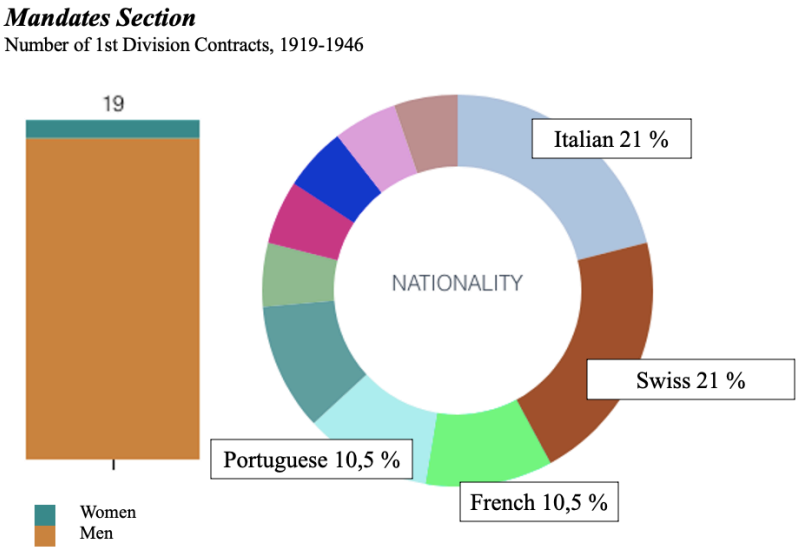

Fig. 3 Mandates Section. Statistics and Visualizations: Haakon A. Ikonomou, Yuan Chen, Obaida Hanteer, Jonas Tilsted "Visualizing the League of Nations Secretariat - a Digital Research Tool" (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2023)

These various tasks assigned to the section were carried out by a small crew that never exceeded 16 officials at any given moment during the League's lifespan.[27] In 1922, the section contained only eight officials representing six different countries, including three Members and a Director of Section. The section appears to have been understaffed in its early years, an interpretation supported by director William Rappard's request to hire a new First Division official in August 1922.[28] This appointment was, however, left unresolved long into 1923, as the Committee struggled to find suitable candidates. A factor explicitly contributing to this long delay was the nationality principle of adequate representation. While the Dutchman Rost van Tonningen had been found to possess all the qualifications required for working in the section, the Netherlands had already at the time reached an adequate degree of representation in the Secretariat. Therefore, the Dutch candidate became ineligible for appointment.[29]

[27] "LoN Mandates Section," LONSEA, accessed May 17th, 2022, http://www.lonsea.de/pub/org/1208.
[28] S954-1, Minutes, 11th AC-Meeting, August 24th, 1922.
[29] S954-1, Minutes, 21st AC-Meeting, April 12th, 1923.

It was possibly this long unsuccessful search for qualified candidates of the right nationality which eventually led Rappard and the AC to make a slight compromise. At an AC meeting on the 30th of May 1923, Rappard stated his provisional decision of appointing the Dane, Finn Tage Blichfeldt Friis, in favor of a Finnish candidate as the new First Division member of the Mandates Section. Rappard stated that while he agreed to the desirability of appointing the Finn from a "nationality perspective," he thought the Dane would prove more suitable. To this Drummond replied that if the quality of the two candidates were "more or less equal" he would ask him to choose the Finn on the grounds of his nationality.[30] Nevertheless, Rappard stuck to his own decision and appointed the Dane in favor of the Finnish candidate.[31] Although it is hard to exactly pinpoint the discrepancy in adequate representation between Denmark and Finland at the time, the discussion conveys the impression that the personal qualifications of the two candidates ended up as the deciding factor, since both Denmark and Finland were adequately represented in the Secretariat overall.

Adequate national representation in the Secretariat was not the only guiding principle related to nationality when hiring to the Mandates Section either. An important nationality-related principle for this section was to not hire citizens from Mandatory Powers to ensure impartiality (Ranshofen-Wertheimer 1945: 116-117). Evidently, this rule did not apply to Second or Third Division officials, as both British and French lower officials worked in the section throughout the interwar period.[32] Still, keeping the section "clean" of First Division members from mandatory powers was not always easy for Drummond and the AC. When the section's Swiss director, William Rappard, resigned from the post in 1924, pressure mounted on Drummond to make compromises on the rule. Upon being promoted to Chief of Section the Italian Secretariat official, Vito Catastini, demanded the transfer of the Belgian official, Charles Smets, from the Financial Section to assist him in his new position.

Although Drummond was aware of the potential language challenges that Catastini could face in his new role, he did not want to create a precedent for the future that citizens of mandatory powers (such as Belgium) could become higher officials within the section. Instead of complying with the

[30] S954-1, Minutes, 22nd AC-Meeting, May 30th, 1923.
[31] "Finn Tage Blichfeldt Friis," LONSEA, accessed May 17th, 2022, http://www.lonsea.de/pub/person/5525.
[32] LONSEA, "LoN Mandates Section".

demand for the transfer of Smets, Drummond was only prepared to consider attaching a French speaking assistant in times of need if the work proved "too much" for Catastini and his section.[33] The nationality rule to "safeguard the full impartiality of the staff" was not to be circumvented.

Recruiting only "eligible" nationals to the section continued to be a matter of complication in the years that followed. When another debate arose in April 1928 about this matter, it was once again stirred by the Italian Chief of Section, Vito Catastini. To fill a vacant post in the Mandates Section, he now proposed to transfer the Swiss official, de Haller, from the Minorities Section. Drummond regarded de Haller as the best option available within the Secretariat but was himself interested in finding a suitable Canadian. From the viewpoint of the Secretary General, a Canadian official would have the capability to "speak more firmly and criticize more freely than could any European" regarding Britain's mandated territories.

As pointed out by Catastini, however, choosing a Canadian for the vacant post would bring its own issues. Not only would it cause delay to complete the appointment, as it would take time to find a qualified Canadian; choosing a Canadian would also risk stirring negative public opinion, since it could give the "impression of an arrangement between different members of the British Empire."[34] The Italian Chief of Section considered it unnecessary to draw attention to the unspoken fact that the League was essentially a "League of Empires" with Canada as just one of several territories under the British Crown which had been given membership (Pedersen 2017: 113-138). Appointing a Canadian First Division member to the Mandates Section would *de facto* had been as much a violation of the nationality rule in 1928, as the transfer of the Belgian official to section would four years earlier. In the end, Drummond decided not to circumvent this important nationality principle in recruitment to the Mandates Section and agreed to the transfer of de Haller in favor of his own suggestion of a Canadian.

As can be seen from the above, the hierarchical nature of the Mandate System and the League itself added further complexity to the recruitment of higher officials to the Mandates Section. Two, separate principles in relation to the citizenship of candidates had to be considered when evaluating

[33] S955, Minutes, 7th AC-Meeting, August 20th, 1924.
[34] S956, Minutes, 4th AC-Meeting, April 24th, 1928.

candidates. The first pertaining to all sections, including the Mandates Section, was to favor candidates from non-adequately represented member states. The second principle was to not appoint citizens of nations which held power over mandated territories. Aside from these two rules, no specific nationalities appear to have been deemed particularly suited over others to work in the Mandates Section. There is no indication of European citizens being preferred ahead of non-European citizens, unlike what was the case for the Minorities Section. As noted, Drummond even saw potential benefits of appointing a Canadian to Member of Section before considering all political implications of this move.

Conclusion

This article has investigated how nationality constrained recruitment of First Division officials to three, separate sections of the League Secretariat. It can be concluded that despite these section's similarities in size and policy fields, the aspect of nationality did not constrain recruitment in a uniform way across all three sections. Instead, other factors such as the degree of political autonomy given the section influenced to what extend the citizenship of candidates constrained recruitment. For all three sections in question, the primary, nationality-related concern in recruitment was to favor candidates of non-adequately represented member states. Yet for both the Minorities and the Mandates Section, the nature of the minority protection scheme and the mandates system respectively added further nationality-related constrains to the recruitment considerations.

In the Minorities Section, a clear preference was had for Europeans in the First Division as opposed to non-Europeans. This is evident both from the composition of First Division nationals working in the section and from the AC-minutes. It was deemed necessary of candidates to possess significant knowledge about minority groups in Eastern Europe. This effectively made non-European citizens unsuited for the job while also drastically reducing the spectrum of suitable Europeans. The narrow range of appropriate nationalities made it difficult to recruit First Division officials to the section from a suitable nation in regard to the internationalization principle.

For the Mandates Section we find many of the same issues as mentioned for the Minorities section. To uphold the legitimacy of the Mandate System it was necessary to keep the section clear of

nationals from mandatory powers. This principle also effectively overruled the general principle of improving adequate national representation when recruiting First Division officials to the Mandates Section. Still, the range of suitable nationalities in the Mandates Section was less narrow than what was the case for the Minorities Section, as both Europeans and non-Europeans were deemed suitable.

For the Disarmament Section, the biggest constrains from a nationality perspective surrounded the directorship of the section. Since the Great Powers did not wish to grant the section much political autonomy, it allowed for nationals of smaller powers to continuously obtain the post of director. In general, the nationality-based constrains on recruitment to the Disarmament Section were much less significant than for the two other sections due to its limited autonomy. The employment of the stateless Ex-Russian, Nokhem Sloutzki, is emblematic of this reality. For Drummond and the AC, the section's marginalized political role provided the benefit of being able to clearly prioritize the improvement of adequate national representation in the overall Secretariat when recruiting to the Disarmament section.

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"THIS VILEST OF TRADES"

The League of Nations' Anti-trafficking Inquiry of 1927

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ABSTRACT: This article examines the League of Nations' official inquiry into the international question of trafficking, integral to their wider anti-trafficking campaign of the 1920's. Through this, it assesses the consequences of employing external experts drafted from activist non-governmental organizations to conduct large-scale international research projects. In doing so it argues that the League's official standards of unbiased data collection and knowledge production was somewhat compromised and that the leaders of the external research group used this official inquiry as a form of trojan horse to challenge and undermine the legitimacy of the system of regulated prostitution. Furthermore, this article unfolds how the research constructed new systems of knowledge about the nature of prostitution, that in turn positioned the system as a global threat with the potential to degenerate the future of humanity.

KEYWORDS: League of Nations, anti-trafficking, regulated prostitution, knowledge production, the interwar period

Introduction

During the last decades, the understanding of the League of Nations has undergone a significant transformation within the historiography of international history. This revisionist turn within the scholarship has sought to distance itself from earlier post-war accounts of the League's failed attempts at establishing lasting peace on the European continent (Pedersen 2007: 1091-92). In turn, this heterogeneous body of work has favoured interpretations that emphasised the League as an autonomous institution with its own agency rather than a space in which nation states struggle to maximise their own interest (Gram-Skjoldager, Ikonomou og Kahlert 2020: 215). The heightened scholarly focus on the League's agency and important work in combating the numerous social, economic and public health crises of the interwar period, was in many ways spearheaded by academic work focusing on the League's more specialised organs under the Secretariat. Taking my cue from this development within the research field I wish to focus on the League's specialised work with trafficking and prostitution, more specifically analysing the League's official transnational inquiry into the trafficking of women and children. The question of prostitution and trafficking featured prominently within interwar debates on women's rights, sexual morality, public health and race, and led to the strengthening of transnational cooperation between interest groups, founded on a wide range of ideologies such as feminism, social hygiene, Christianity, etc. These non-governmental interest groups problematised prostitution and trafficking on completely different grounds but sought the same solution; a complete abolition of state sanctioned, regulated prostitution (Pliley 2010: 105).

The state sanctioned system of regulated prostitution had its roots in nineteenth century health policies, a time before the existence of effective medical treatment of venereal disease. The system was a product of the period's optimism surrounding state regulation and was thought to protect the health of key societal sectors, such as the military and commercial navy. This legislation imposed strict regulations upon the women employed in the field of sex work, such as mandatory registration, medical checks, limited mobility, etc. (Levine 2003: 18-19). After the turn of the century the system came under increasing pressure from a wide range of non-governmental interest groups but were, however, still widespread throughout the world at the time of the League's campaign.

In this context, the newly formed League of Nations conducted an ambitious campaign aimed at rallying their member states around shared anti-trafficking solutions. Due to the nature of the League as a transnational actor, this fight was approached on a global level focusing on the act of trafficking rather than prostitution itself. One of the League's central ideals was to gather information and generate accurate knowledge that would contribute to creating a more rational foundation for the international debate on sensitive questions (Cloet 2019: iii). The Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children (CTW) proposed a far-reaching investigation into the international aspects of sex work. This investigation was carried out by the research group called The Special Body of Experts (SBE). The group worked on an official mandate from the League of Nations Council but their work was funded by the American Social Hygiene Association (ASHA) and was conducted between 1924-1926 in more than a hundred cities throughout Europe and South America, culminating in the publication of two reports in 1927.

The League's anti-trafficking work has received some scholarly attention from historians working with the League. Generally, these accounts tend to stress the role of the international women's rights movement of the period. Some of these works have focused on the important role of the international feminist organisations in shaping popular opinion and transnational anti-trafficking cooperation (Gorman 2008). Other works have focused on the debates within the League's CTW responsible for anti-trafficking work under the social section of the Secretariat. These works have tended to focus on the feminists working inside the League and analysed the competing discourses on sex work within the League's specialised organs (Garcia 2012; Pliley 2010). There seems to be a lack of research, however, focusing on the League's data collection and knowledge production in this field, and on how the League as an authoritative voice on transnational issues, portrayed the international "problem" of prostitution. These are the themes I want to address with this article. The official data collection and knowledge production of the League was conducted by the SBE, a group with strong financial and ideological ties to the American social hygiene movement. For all these reasons I want to assess *what knowledge this body of work produced, and how the ideological tendencies of the group affected the knowledge produced in these reports.* In doing so I wish to further understand the political nature of data collection as a discipline and nuance the understanding of

the League's role as a purveyor of unbiased, objective fact-based knowledge in the international political landscape of the interwar period.

Health, ideology and science in the interwar period

By examining how notions around science, health and sexual morality shaped the League's work, I want to use the League of Nations archive (LONA) to create a cultural history and add to the field of research concerned with social questions. In trying to understand the intimate links between scientific research, ideology and culture, I build on existing perspectives of knowledge production. These concepts illuminate how underlying norms and ideologies affect the production of knowledge, how scientific research never operates autonomously from the historical and cultural context in which it is conducted (Foucault 2013: 203), and how these new scientific breakthroughs reinforce and strengthen categorisations and hierarchisation through the establishment of scientifically based ideas of normality (Taylor 2014: 62). I am interested in understanding the close relationship between the research group, research field and findings. Hereby trying to illuminate the inseparable nature between the normative or cultural context in which the research was carried out, and the framing of the international "problem" and conceptualisation of prostitution. With this strategy I deconstruct the report, searching for inconsistencies between the League's initial motivations and standards of official inquiries, and the ideologically motivated conclusions of the research.

The interwar period saw a stark increase in state-sponsored initiatives in the realms of public health and social medicine through the establishment of health ministries and public campaigns promoting family values. These developments led to a heightened focus on protecting the bodies of the nation from influences deemed degenerating by the state, exemplified by the institutionalisation of the "delinquent" and "promiscuous", and mass sterilisation programs (Mazower 1998: 91). I am interested in understanding the links between science, hygiene and sexual morality in interwar discourse and research. In these fields, sexuality was politicised and made a public concern for the state, with health and sexuality becoming a benchmark of a strong societal foundation, and thus a potential threat to societal cohesion and order (Taylor 2014: 47). The state continued to counteract these perceived threats with a wide range of campaigns aimed at improving the overall morality in

society (Foucault 1994: 151). These campaigns produced taxonomies and hierarchies, structured around the formulation of norms, by which it was possible to judge or divide the population into virtuous/sinful, normal/abnormal, healthy/degenerate (Davidson 1994: 292-4).

This contextual backdrop helps illuminate the broader developments in the realm of science, public health and morality central to Interwar health and social policies within the nation state. With this backdrop, we can investigate these developments on a transnational or international level through the leagues data collection and large-scale research within the realms of public health and sexology, and showcase how the League's knowledge production produced norms around sex work and sexuality as a whole. In this article I aim to showcase how the League's normative knowledge production in this field made prostitution a degenerating force, not only within the nation states but as a global threat for the future of humanity, and how this to some degree was a product of a conscious strategy of the leading members of the research group.

The core of my analysis relies primarily on the Report of the Special Body of Experts on the Traffic in Women and Children published by the League in 1927. This body of work presents the international trafficking "problem", the most significant findings and conclusions made by the researchers and gives us a vital insight into how the knowledge of this international "problem" was constructed. Through the digitised archives of the League of Nations, held at the United Nations in Geneva, I have been able to access not only the final reports but also the drafts. Due to the unpublished nature of the drafts, they allow us to gain insights into the more explicit ideological tendencies of the group's work. In comparing the two texts we can follow the editorial process and see what areas of the research were toned down or left out in the final report, showing us what was thought to be appropriate and worthy of being published. This being said, it is important to note that there are limitations to how much we can conclude about the editorial selection of the dataset from the reports alone, without crossing over into the realm of speculation. In overcoming some of these limitations I have chosen to include a group of sources that can shed light on the publication context.

The American connections

The CTW consisted of a wide range of non-governmental interest groups, who aided the League with everything from expertise to the funding of the League's research. This organizational structure was in no way extraordinary, but widespread within the social section of the Secretariat, and was in many ways the product of a lack of institutional support and underfunding (Pedersen 2007: 1111). It was within this committee that the idea of a large-scale inquiry into trafficking was conceived. During this time, the League reinforced their legal tools for combating and preventing international criminal activity (Garzia 2012: 98) and the anti-trafficking campaign supported them in establishing the right to carry out on-site investigations within the member states (Pedersen 2007: 1110).

The USA did not join the League of Nations and therefore was not officially involved in this international cooperation; however, American interest groups had a profound influence on this inquiry. The chief architect behind this global investigation was the committee's unofficial US delegate, Grace Abbott. In a plea to the League Council, she proposed her visions and motivations for such a large-scale endeavour: "(…)*an intelligent basis for a sound programme for international co-operation for the suppression of the traffic*".[1] In order to reach this potential, she argues for the deployment of professional experts in obtaining the facts and refuting exaggerations and denials of this global problem[2]. The argument put forward by Abbott aligns with the League's use of experts. At the time it was believed that the League could avoid partiality and nationalist bias by using outside experts because these would secure the acquisition of impartial knowledge and thus aid the Council and the Assembly when deciding on sensitive matters (Cloet 2019: 1).

Abbott had close ties to the American Social Hygiene Association (ASHA) and the inquiry was made possible by their contributions. ASHA put forward 75.000 USD thereby funding the whole operation[3]. Head of ASHA, Dr. William F. Snow, was appointed by the Council to oversee the SBE.

[1]League of Nations Archive, Geneva, R636/12/27338/647, 21.03.1923, *Memorandum recommending an investigation through the Secretariat of the League, in order to ascertain certain facts regarding this traffic*, 1-2.
[2] LONA, R636/12/27338/647, 21.03.1923, *Memorandum recommending an investigation through the Secretariat of the League, in order to ascertain certain facts regarding this traffic*, 1-2.
[3] League of Nations, *Report of the Special Body of Experts on Traffic in Women and Children - part 1*, (Geneva: Publications of the league of nations, 17.02.1927), 5.

He in turn appointed his colleague, Bascom Johnson, a lawyer in charge of ASHA's legal affairs, to oversee the fieldwork conducted by the research group (Knepper 2016: 143). This shows the symbiosis between official League inquiries and politically motivated interest groups. This wasn't a dim lit conspiracy; these ties were well-established and written into the official report, and this practice characterised every aspect of the League's work (Pedersen 2007: 1092). This aside, it is hard to imagine that the ideological and activist nature of ASHA and its members did not affect the way this problem was framed and presented. In her plea, Abbott clearly states that this organisation is politically motivated "*in the abolition of prostitution*"[4]. This perspective creates a foundation for understanding the cultural and political background of the leading researchers, and the way they understood this international "problem" and the solutions they put forward. The dynamic of American non-governmental interest groups exerting American influence and interests through "non-political" and technical arenas such as anti-trafficking, can in many ways be understood in a wider context of the exercising of North American soft power during the time of political isolationism (Giannuli 1998: 48; Tournès 2022).

The Report of the Special Body of Experts

At the time of the research, ideas about innocent, young, white women being kidnapped and trafficked into prostitution were widespread in popular culture (Knepper 2016: 139). The report clearly states that it wished to challenge and refute these prevalent notions about the nature of trafficking:

> The very publication of such rumours without any attempt to verify their accuracy tends to divert public attention from the real facts of the situation[5]

The research landscape is divided on the question of the League's anti-trafficking efforts' eurocentrism. Some scholars have emphasized the League's efforts to distance themselves from the earlier so-called "white slavery" campaigns by adopting the more inclusive term "trafficking" as an

[4] LONA, R636/12/27338/647, 1923, Memorandum recommending an investigation through the Secretariat of the League, in order to ascertain certain facts regarding this traffic, 2.
[5] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 9.

important step in deracializing international anti-trafficking efforts (Leppänen 2007: 531; Legg 2012: 648). However, this body of research focuses on the works of the CTW and the League's anti-trafficking efforts as a whole. When looking at this specific report and the make-up of the research group (SBE) it is clear that the majority of the researchers were drafted from Europe and North America and that the leading members of this group were affiliated with activist interest groups with strong Anglo-Saxon notions on sexual morality and explicit interests in the abolition of state-sanctioned prostitution. Even though the report covered the trafficking in both European and South American territories the group only had one representative native to South America, Dr. Paulina Luisi, who, as I'll show later, ended up discrediting the report's findings and conclusions.

The SBE clearly saw themselves in opposition to the aforementioned narratives and saw their fact-based research as the antidote. By doing this they aligned themselves with the overall ethos of the League, where the role of expert knowledge would create an objective foundation for the debates on transnational problems. By utilising the gravitas of "scientifically" based wording, they were able to create new systems of knowledge about the nature of prostitution and establish new "truths" or conceptions of this field, by placing themselves in opposition to these popular narratives or "*rumours*". The ideological bias or tendency of the researchers is quite explicit and appears all throughout the source material and clearly influenced how the knowledge around the transnational aspects of prostitution were framed and conceptualised. This tendency within the text is clearly showcased in what can only be described as a trigger warning:

> The proper examination of a social evil of this description, which is naturally repellent to decent-minded people, must involve reference to many drab and sordid details and even to practices which are shocking in their depravity.[6]

This warning to the readers shows us how the researchers engaged and negotiated with the sexual morality of the time, and their attitude towards sex workers. It is clear that there is no effort made to come across as objective, and no formal separation between the researchers' normative bias and the research field. The objective of uncovering the "truth" is interwoven with a moralistic discourse,

[6] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 6.

here showcased in the normative wording. It is quite apparent that this strong bias affected the way in which the data was presented. When looking at the draft it becomes clear that details were left out of the final report. This could point to the fact that they were wary to cross into the realm of sensationalism, or that a report sanctioned by the League had to conform to certain standards[7]. Examples of this editing process can be seen in the omission of very explicit descriptions of the type of services provided within the field of sex work. These descriptions were changed from the specific, for example "*sodomy*"[8], to more general wording such as "*various forms of perversion*"[9].

The scientific gaze

The scientific methodology and terminology used in the production of this body of knowledge allowed the authors to showcase how localised centres of "vice" could have a corrupting influence on the global community as a whole by illustrating how these complex networks enabled the transnational movement of body and capital. In the draft, they described the work as sociological and scientific in nature[10]. These terms do not appear in the final report but there is no doubt that the investigation was influenced by ideas from the fields of sociology and economics. The data collected is both qualitative and quantitative in nature, ranging from statistics to interviews, field observations and visual representations (maps of trafficking routes). The information in the reports was obtained through collaborations with governments, voluntary organisations and most notably representatives of the so-called underworld. As mentioned earlier, this was part of a wider campaign establishing the right of the League to interrogate governments and carry out on-site investigations. The most controversial method was the deployment of undercover agents infiltrating the criminal trafficking networks. They did this, in their own words, to uncover "*what was going on behind the scenes*"[11], defending their methods by stressing the need to expose the factual reality of the problem, and refute any questioning of the validity of the information obtained through criminals[12].

[7] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 6.
[8] League of Nations Archive, Geneva, S148-A-3A-1, 1927, *Traffic in women and children - Special Body of Experts* - Draft, 25.
[9] Report of the Special Body of Experts,, part 1,14.
[10] LONA, S148-A-3A-1, 1927, *Traffic in women and children - Special Body of Experts* - Draft, 131.
[11] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 6.
[12] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 6.

The sociological influence on the conceptualization of this field is very clear. Most notably is the use of detailed network analysis and field observations, describing the inner workings of the trafficking rings in play. They conclude that no evidence was found to support any ideas about a coherent international conspiracy behind the transnational trafficking in women, but state that these operations were carried out by loosely related autonomous, local groups or "*clubs*"[13]. The sociological influence is clear in the descriptions of specific clubs taken from the field notes of the investigators, in which detailed analysis depicts the different aspects of the trades and shows how logistics, capital, spaces, criminals and corrupt officials are working together in complex networks[14].

Another important scientific influence in the knowledge produced, are key ideas from the field of economics. In this section I wish to illuminate how notions of a capitalist self-regulating economy influenced the way in which international traffic was understood and presented by the authors. They described international traffic as a business like any other, governed by the iron laws of supply and demand[15]. With the concept of a global, self-regulating economy, they were able to construct links between local surges in the market and the transnational "problem". A good example of this can be found in the report's description of so-called temporary markets. The report defines these temporary markets as an artificial surge in the number of males due to festivities, sporting events, tourist attractions or military presence[16]. An example of the problematisation of these markets is the description of the relationship between the USA and the Mexican town of Tia Juana.

> The racing season is said to attract over a hundred thousand visitors a day, the majority of whom are American. By the side of legitimate attractions has grown up an organised centre of vice which panders to the worst sexual excesses (...)[17]

The report concludes that these temporary and local markets have a direct effect on the stimulation of international traffic[18]. Economic ideas about a global market allows the authors to problematize

[13] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 24.
[14] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 24-25.
[15] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 9.
[16] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 43.
[17] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 13-14.
[18] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 43.

local centres of "vice". With this logic, Tia Juana's "immoral" industries cannot be isolated but feed into a worldwide system of the supply and demand of vice. During the research the USA was in the middle of the prohibition era, which is an important context. Using the example of Tia Juana, they are able to argue that a local industry can have a corrupting influence on an international level, stimulating the international trafficking of sex workers to this centre and thus giving Americans access to activities deemed immoral and illegal by their own government.

Constructing villains and victims

The report produced knowledge regarding the power relations within the field of sex work by creating a strong binary between innocent sex workers and villainous traffickers. Furthermore, this construction channelled the heavy weight of this global problem on the shoulders of immoral individuals, hardwired for delinquency. The report states that trafficking should be understood as a degenerating force on the societal foundation:

> The traffic as it exists would not appear by any means to be only a traffic in prostitutes, but a traffic in prostitutes is an evil which on all grounds of health or morals and in the interest of the future of the race, must be uprooted.[19]

This shows the intersection between health, morality and politics in the report, and must be understood through the broader scientific context of the time. The emergence of social medicine, with its essential idea that public health could be significantly improved, not through medicine alone but through political reforms altering the social circumstances within society. This realization brought a better and more holistic understanding of public health, but it also led to the politicization of these international questions (Gorman 2017: 204). In the quote the authors express the belief that prostitution was a degenerating force with the potential to corrode the fabric of society. Through this lens, the problem of international prostitution is elevated to a question of protecting the purity of the global society on the grounds of morality and health. The weight of this "evil" is cemented through the individuals partaking in this global trade.

[19] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 19.

In describing the power relations between the sex workers and the procurers, the report creates a strong binary of villains and victims, producing archetypal characters at each end of this construct. The traffickers play the part of procuring and transporting women into this global network and are described as:

> (…) pests of society are real parasites who live on the body as well as on the soul of their host.[20]

This group works autonomously with loose ties of camaraderie to other parts of the network. In the quotation we see again this metaphor of society as a collective entity and how these individuals' prey on both the soul (morality) and the body (health) of the host (society). Again, we have two intertwined discourses; a descriptive scientific gaze that aims to understand and categorise the different cogwheels of this international "problem", and a moralistic one that produces knowledge about these actors as inherently immoral, degenerating parasites. Another central group of actors described in the report are the so-called souteneurs (French for *pimp*). This group takes control of the business of prostitution after a woman has been trafficked to a new location.

> Once a foreign girl is taken to a distant country (...) the power of the souteneur is proportionately increased and she is accordingly a better subject for intimidation than local girls. Herein lies the studied cruelty and slavery which inevitably follows international traffic.[21]

This presents the unequal and exploitative power dynamic between the sex worker and the souteneur. The text makes use of the concept of slavery to emphasize this dehumanizing and asymmetrical dynamic. Another interesting aspect is the idea that these techniques for maintaining the exploitative power balance is a product of a well thought out methodology, a form of "*studied cruelty*", adding to the idea that the intermediaries of sex work are inherently inhumane. The souteneurs are also described as being "*low-down rascals*" engaged in "*any disreputable line of business*"[22]. I do not consider the categories produced in the report mere fabrications or complete constructions in a social constructivist sense. In the report there are countless examples of extreme cruelty that points to actual experiences and tragedies of the lives of sex workers. The point that I

[20] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 9.
[21] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1,15.
[22] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 28.

am attempting to make however, is that the language used signifies a deterministic understanding of the criminalized intermediaries of sex work. There is little to no desire to understand the underlying causes of what led to these careers in crime, and through this the souteneurs, traffickers and madams are reduced to mere archetypal villains deprived of their humanity. They are described as deviants, judged not by their acts, but by their character (Taylor 2014: 44). Despite their initial motivation to challenge existing popular narratives surrounding innocent, young women being forced into prostitution, the report reproduced ideas about the exploitative power relations within the field of sex work and deprived the women involved in this line of work of any agency. Finally, the knowledge produced in this report can only be thought to have furthered the stigmatization of these women through the excessive use of strong moralistic language, condemning the field and their acts as a whole (Garcia 2012: 128).

Regulated prostitution

The system of regulated prostitution had its roots in 19th century health policies and was, at the time of the report, widespread throughout South America, Europe and its colonial territories. Even though Britain had abolished the system in the UK they still made use of this regulation in their colonies. The arguments for this system's legitimacy were manyfold, ranging from military necessity, public decency to maintaining colonial hierarchies (Levine 2003: 20). I argue that the authors used an official inquiry on trafficking, as a form of trojan horse, to problematize prostitution itself. The report tied the stimulation of global trafficking to nations with relaxed attitudes towards prostitution. Throughout the report the authors challenge a range of state-held arguments in favour of regulated prostitution. These arguments range from the idea that prostitution is an inevitable force within societies and that regulation helps maintain the greatest amount of public order and decency[23], to the most influential argument; that regulated prostitution was the best weapon in the fight against venereal diseases, in a time where effective treatments were limited[24].

[23] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 40.
[24] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 40.

The authors claim they didn't want to discuss the merits of this system[25]. This seems like nothing more than a thinly veiled rhetorical strategy, and in doing so they guard themselves against possible criticism from member states, practising regulated prostitution within their sovereign territories. When consulting the draft of the report this inherent tendency becomes clear. In the draft the researchers clearly state that they hope that a scientific inquiry such as this will not only strengthen the collective international will to understand and combat the transnational traffic, but that the report would challenge the idea of regulated prostitution altogether[26]. One could argue that the above-mentioned agenda did not fit with the initial reasoning for the League-sanctioned inquiry, that being an investigation of the trafficking question and not a moralistic critique of prostitution itself. Another explanation for this choice is that the report could be interpreted as a partisan contribution, aimed at converting member states to the Anglo-Saxon-inspired system of prohibition.

Even though the motivation was edited out of the official report, the knowledge produced is still inherently biased. The report ties together local regulated prostitution and the global problem of trafficking[27]. Throughout the report this point is stressed continuously and even concluded to be the primary reason for the stimulus in international trafficking, making this local regulation the primary cause of this global "problem"[28].

The report presents a range of counterarguments against local regulated prostitution. Firstly, an argument is made solely against prostitution with no relation to the international trafficking question. They argue that regulated prostitution does not only cater to the inevitable number of "*abnormal minds*" in a given populous, but that it is a corrupting factor in itself, leading healthy young men into depraved and immoral practices[29]. According to this logic these vice districts act as a kind of motor, spreading unwanted character traits to a wider and previously unsoiled audience, degenerating the potential of future generations. The report concludes with a plea to the governments relying on regulated prostitution for the prevention of the spread of venereal diseases:

[25] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 40.
[26] LONA, S148-A-3A-1, 1927, *Traffic in women and children - Special Body of Experts* - Draft, 129-31.
[27] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 40
[28] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 14.
[29] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 14.

> (…) to consider the possibility of abandoning a system which is fraught with such dangers from the point of view of international traffic.[30]

This quote shows how the authors saw their potential influence in persuading governments to move away from this system. This indicates that this League-sanctioned inquiry was used to challenge the institution of prostitution itself through a form of activism disguised as an inquiry initiated to serve the collective interests of the international community.

The aftermath

In this final section of this article, I wish to investigate both the internal and external criticism of the report's findings in the immediate aftermath of its publication. In doing so I wish to further the understanding of the consequences of the League's use of outside experts in delivering an unbiased, fact-based foundation for international debates. The report received widespread attention following its publication and broke the records for sales of any publications made by the League[31].

There was a fight both at the external and internal level of the League to stamp out criticism of the report's conclusions and give an official sanctioning of its integrity. Internally, an official complaint made by the only South American member of the SBE, Dr. Paulina Luisi, directly to the Secretary-General of the Secretariat, Sir Eric Drummond. I have not been able to locate this document within the archive, but I have come across several sources referencing this formal complaint, one of these being a letter from the Head of the SBE, Dr. William F. Snow, to Drummond, in which Snow tries to discredit Luisi's claims and argues that:

> we do not have any evidence to support the view that the enquiry has been either insufficient or superficial for the use we have made of our information.[32]

[30] Report of the Special Body of Experts, part 1, 48.
[31] Rachel E. Crowdy, "The Humanitarian Activities of the League of Nations" *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (May, 1927): 156.
[32] LONA, R673/12/63426/28269, 05.12.1927, *Reply from the Chairman of the Special Body of Experts to the Secretary-General*, 2.

In an attempt to stop the circulation of the critical memorandum the Head of the Social Section under the League's Secretariat, Dame Rachel Crowdy, methodically discredits Dr. Luisi's claims and concludes the following:

> I cannot help feeling that if the memorandum on her point of view is circulated to the South American Committee, it may give the impression that the Secretariat - which I imagine should take no part in such a matter - is trying to discredit a report which the Council has thought fit to accept and publish and which was prepared by Experts nominated by the Council[33]

Crowdy clearly tried to avoid the potential crisis of the Secretariat coming across as divided, by using the force of the organisational hierarchy to sanction the validity of the report's conclusions. She invokes the authority of the Council and argues that the report's findings were not only sanctioned but also the will of this leading organ. In doing so she also gives the highest institutional seal of approval to the body of research carried out by external experts. These two examples from internal affairs clearly illuminate how key actors involved in this inquiry, tried to protect the validity of the report in the eyes of their organisational superiors, but also how they sought to silence critical voices, hereby making the Secretariat appear undivided, by rallying up institutional support for the report's findings.

As mentioned earlier this battle was not only fought internally but also in the public sphere through external lines of communication. The New York Times published an article describing the South American delegates' claims that the report:

> gave a rough whitewashing to the Anglo-Saxon countries while the Latins came in for a bitter and unjust criticism.[34]

Another line of criticism came from the, at the time, famous and influential French investigative journalist Albert Londres. Through his work "The Road to Buenos Ayres" (1928) he denounced the report as being riddled with false information. Londres did not believe that abolition was a proper tool in combating the problems surrounding prostitution, because this approach did not

[33]LONA, S513/20/7, 14.12.1927. *Memo de Dame Rachel Crowdy, Dr. luisi et la Comité d'Experts,* 3.
[34] "White Slave Report Revisited for the League", *New York Times*, 27 December 1927, p. 27.

acknowledge and engage with the root causes of the problem, these being first and foremost poverty, according to him (Knepper 2016: 144) In an article written just after the first part of the report was published, Crowdy alludes to the extensive treatment of the report by the press. In this initial article she defends the integrity of the report categorically:

> Their conclusions are founded on fact. What the experts have said in their Report they have substantiated.[35]

In a later article of hers regarding the report, she nuanced her categorical stance. In the text she alludes to some of the more ideological aspects of the research, claiming:

> Even if one does not enter into the moral or hygienic side of the question, it is easy to realize how terrible this evil is.[36]

Crowdy is not denouncing the factual basis of the report but acknowledges a moralistic and social hygienic layer in the text. Bringing in these sources, I am not trying to evaluate the factual integrity of the report's findings as this is neither possible nor within the scope and theme of this article. I've engaged with these sources because they, in relation to the overall examination of the report, give a nuanced perspective on the League's use of inquiries. Despite these critical voices, the scale of the inquiry was unprecedented and gave the League a "scientific" basis for swaying nation states towards the abolition of state sanctioned prostitution. The findings and conclusions of the report aided the League in passing influential anti-trafficking conventions which laid the groundwork for later international anti-trafficking efforts led by the UN (Metzger 2007: 73-74). As I have described earlier, the ideal behind these official inquiries was to give an unbiased foundation on transnational questions where the member states were divided. When examining this specific inquiry, this idealised objective seems to have been somewhat compromised. This should serve as an important example of the symbiotic relationship between the League and non-governmental interest groups,

[35] Crowdy, "The Humanitarian Activities of the League of Nations", 157.
[36] Dame Rachel Crowdy, "The League of Nations: Its Social and Humanitarian Work" *The American Journal of Nursing*, Vol. 28, No. 4 (Apr., 1928): 351-352.

and the pragmatic compromise of conducting large-scale transnational research with limited funds and in areas that lay outside what was perceived as being the core objectives of the organisation.

Conclusion

Researchers always operate within a specific historical and cultural context. The leaders of this investigation and the majority of the investigators conducting the field work, were drafted from activist interest groups with very specific notions of the intersections between politics and morality. Their report constructed new systems of knowledge about the hierarchical power relations within the field of sex work and in doing so produced a strong reductionist categorisation of the different actors involved in this work, placing part of the blame for this international "problem" in the hands of abnormal-minded criminals hardwired for delinquency.

Furthermore, it made prostitution into a corrupting force with the potential of degenerating the health of humanity. The analysis of their knowledge production shows how this worldview acted as a prism, through which this problem was interpreted, and solutions were proposed. It is not possible, within the scope of this article, to make categorical conclusions about whether this process was without a doubt intentional, but the source material indicates that this process was, to some degree, a product of a conscious strategy by the leaders of this investigation. Looking at the wide-ranging criticisms it becomes clear that the inherent bias of the research group clashed with continental European (French) and South American notions of sexual morality and understandings of the phenomenon of prostitution within society. This should serve as an example of the inherent difficulty of the Secretariat in embodying their formal ideals of impartiality of their research, working in the interests of the collective international community. By appointing outside experts with activist motivations and strong Anglo-Saxon notions of morality, the inquiry became limited in its understanding of the wide-ranging customs and cultural attitudes towards sex work that characterized the international community.

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