Twentieth Century British History, Vol. 34, No. 1, 2023, pp. 60–97 https://doi.org/10.1093/tcbh/hwac023

Faridah Zaman* *University of Oxford, UK*

The Abstraction of Sovereignty: The Ottoman Empire in Early Twentieth-Century Socialist Thought

Abstract

This article examines the way British socialists came to provide intellectual and political weight to the 'internationalizing' of non-European territory during and after the First World War. While there is now a substantial body of scholarship articulating the continuities between Victorian liberal imperialism and the liberal internationalism of the early twentieth century that gave rise, most notably, to the League of Nations' mandates system, parallel developments within socialist thought in Britain have been less readily noted. Critically, leading Fabian Society intellectuals reaffirmed the late nineteenth-century belief that European powers had the legal as well as moral right to partition and internationalize territories and markets in the name of preserving peace and advancing prosperity. Indeed, in the drive to produce conceptually robust positions on problems of world order, in certain respects socialists went furthest in scope and ambition. An aspect of this dynamic is explored here by paying particular attention to the place of the Ottoman Empire in socialist discussions of international government and the mandates system.

Introduction

This article examines the way British socialists came to provide intellectual and political weight to the 'internationalizing' of non-European territory during and after the First World War. While a substantial body of scholarship has established elements of continuity between nineteenth-century British liberal imperialism and the liberal

* faridah.zaman@history.ox.ac.uk

Earlier versions of this article were presented at the Oxford Political Thought Seminar and the Oxford Modern British History Seminar—my thanks to attendees at both for their feedback and to the reviewers at *Twentieth Century British History*.

Advance Access publication 6 September 2022

internationalism of the early twentieth century that gave rise, most notably, to the League of Nations, there were parallel transformations within socialist thought that ought to be regarded as also part of 'the shifting spectrum of liberal and illiberal politics' of this period.[1] If a seemingly revived liberal imperialism during the war helped inaugurate novel international structures such as the League's controversial mandates system for the former Ottoman and German Empires, Fabian socialists who occupied prominent positions in the Labour movement of the 1910s and 1920s were very much part of this history. Critically, Fabians held firm to the late nineteenth-century positivist belief that European powers had the legal and moral right to manage the affairs of the non-European world, and to partition territories and markets in the name of preserving peace and advancing prosperity within Europe. These beliefs were affirmed in wartime treatises and manifested in socialist war aims. Indeed, in the drive to produce conceptually robust positions on problems of world order, socialists in certain respects outstripped their Liberal counterparts in scope and ambition.

The following discussion pays particular attention to Fabian writing on the Ottoman Empire, or the so-called 'Turkish question'. Formally a member of the European political system following the Treaty of Paris in 1856, the Empire occupied a liminal status on the threshold of European society; this was embodied physically by its capital, Istanbul (Constantinople), which straddled the waterways that connected the Black Sea to the Mediterranean, Europe to Asia, and served as the seat of the Ottoman Sultanate and Caliphate. Existing examinations of the relationship between imperial and internationalist thought have taken the revival of a paternalist language surrounding the 'tutelage' of so-called backward peoples and underdeveloped territories to be the key marker of ideological continuity. While the language of tutelage was certainly applied to the Ottoman Empire by European observers, the pressing concern in the 1910s was less that it was in a condition of political infancy and more that, in its apparent inability to manage its internal and external relations, it was stoking wider international disorder. As an object of internationalist attention, the Ottoman Empire highlights a set of arguments—particularly acute in Fabian thought—focused on order rather than tutelage per se. Discussions of its recent history and post-war future make clear that whereas tutelage deferred questions of national sovereignty and the self-government of tutored peoples into the distant future, a focus on order treated those questions as marginal and perhaps even actively hostile to the ends of internationalism.

[1] Philippa Hetherington and Glenda Sluga, 'Liberal and Illiberal Internationalisms', *Journal of World History*, 31 (2020), 1–9, at 2.

I

While there were earlier imperial critiques on the wider left, it was not until the Boer War (1899–1902) at the turn of the twentieth century that imperialism received sustained consideration in British socialist thought. For influential figures in the Fabian Society, which had been founded in 1884 with the ambition of reconstructing the English social order 'in such a manner as to secure the general welfare and happiness', the war in South Africa made clear the ways in which imperial conflict in distant territories might imperil domestic reform. *Fabianism and the Empire: A Manifesto* (1900), authored by Bernard Shaw and published in the year of the Labour Party's founding, was the first statement of a Fabian view on imperialism. Shaw regarded empire as the inevitable basis of world government and the partitioning of the whole world by imperial powers as a process to be managed judiciously rather than one to be opposed.[2] This was a utilitarian vision in which an increase in general welfare could be brought about by greater order, centralization, and efficiency in the institutions that governed the dependent empire rather than through the expansion of liberty.[3] Shaw's argument—reflecting the views of Sidney Webb and the majority Fabian position on empire at this time—was for a reformed, improved imperialism. As Shaw had already concluded in a speech to a gathering of Fabian Society members in February 1900 prior to the publication of this text, 'a Fabian was necessarily an imperialist'.[4] While there was a dissident minority of Fabian members who did not endorse this position and saw the war as an act of deliberate militarist aggression—dissent that Shaw himself acknowledged in the preface of *Fabianism and the Empire*[5]—by the time of the text's publication, prominent members of this minority, including Ramsay MacDonald, had already departed from the Fabian fold in protest against the Society's refusal to condemn British militarism in the Transvaal.[6]

The Boer War also indelibly shaped the work of the quintessential 'new liberal', J. A. Hobson. Though not formally a Fabian himself, Hobson was closely acquainted with many of its leading lights and

[2] Bernard Shaw, *Fabianism and the Empire: A Manifesto by the Fabian Society* (London, 1900).

[3] Fred. D. Schneider, 'Fabians and the Utilitarian Idea of Empire', *The Review of Politics*, 35 (1973), 501–22.

[4] *Fabian News*, 10 (March 1900), 2, quoted in ibid., 511.

[5] Shaw, *Fabianism and the Empire*, pp. v–vi. Shaw calls himself the editor rather than author of *Fabianism and the Empire*—he saw himself as the 'draughtsman employed by the eight hundred members of the Fabian Society to produce their election manifesto'.

[6] On the ideological fissures produced by the Boer War within the Fabian Society, see Schneider, 'Fabians'; on the reception of Shaw's 'sane imperialism' at large, see Andrew S. Thompson, 'The Language of Imperialism and the Meanings of Empire: Imperial Discourse in British Politics, 1895-1914', *Journal of British Studies*, 36 (1997), 147–77. See also Stephen Howe, *Anticolonialism in British Politics: The Left and the End of Empire 1918-1964* (Oxford, 1993), esp. 35–37.

shared a great deal of their economic outlook.[7] In a series of texts from the late nineteenth century, including most famously, *Imperialism: A Study* (1902), Hobson articulated a relationship between financial interests and imperial expansion that was to prove widely influential. It was notably drawn upon in Vladimir Lenin's *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1916), but also, and seemingly contradictorily, contributed to the development of a case for empire within British socialist thought. Hobson's critique of empire focused on rapacious financial interests that, in the search for greater profits overseas, embroiled Britain in untenable foreign wars; his vision was of a reformed imperial capitalism, a system that would support rather than destroy the wages and conditions of labour at home.[8] Shaw's *Fabianism and the Empire*, written explicitly as an 'election manifesto', had spoken even more narrowly to a domestic programme, devoting roughly half of its pages to 'Home Affairs' and much of the rest to the entanglement of foreign affairs with domestic industry, employment, and working conditions. Historians of the diverse landscape that constituted the pre-war British left have thus tended to stress that the socialist position on imperial questions was frequently an ambivalent one in the nineteenth century, and that, with the rising popularity of empire after the Boer War, the argument among the left was increasingly for an ordered, well-managed empire—a kind of socialist commonwealth—rather than for a world without empire at all. The 'socialist imperialists' were in the clear majority after 1900.[9] Even those such as MacDonald who dissented over the Fabian position on the Boer War did not depart from a vision of empire implicitly structured by racial hierarchies.[10]

If imperialism was a discernibly growing area of concern for British socialists before 1914, the question of internationalism remained rather vaguer. For the Fabians, it was the outbreak of another conflict—the First World War—that prompted the guiding spirits of the society, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, to enlist an author who could articulate 'practical

[7] The distinctions between Hobson and the Fabians' thought, particularly in relation to the role of the market, emerged clearly only in the late 1920s. See Noel Thompson, 'Hobson and the Fabians: Two Road to Socialism in the 1920s', *History of Political Economy*, 26 (1994), 203–20.

[8] J. A. Hobson, *Imperialism: A Study* (London, 1902).

[9] Gregory Claeys, *Imperial Sceptics: British Critics of Empire, 1850-1920* (Cambridge, 2010), ch. 2, at 226. On the radical, dissenting tradition in British thought, see A. J. P. Taylor, *The Trouble Makers: Dissent over Foreign Policy, 1792-1939* (London, 1957); Bernard Porter, *Critics of Empire: British Radicals and the Imperial Challenge* [1968] (London, 2008); Peter Cain, 'Radicalism, Gladstone, and the liberal critique of Disraelian "imperialism"', in Duncan Bell (ed.), *Victorian Visions of Global Order. Empire and International Relations in Nineteenth-Century Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2007), 215–38. On anti-imperialism and the left, see also Howe, *Anticolonialism*, Partha Sarathi Gupta, *Imperialism and the British Labour Movement, 1914-1964* (Cambridge, 1975); Nicholas Owens, *The British Left and India: Metropolitan Anti-imperialism, 1885-1947* (Oxford, 2007). Covering a longer period, see Priyamvada Gopal, *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London, 2019).

[10] Howe, *Anticolonialism*, 45–6.

methods' by which to achieve the Fabians' 'progressive aspirations' internationally in the post-war world.[11] Financial resources for the undertaking were secured from Joseph Rowntree, which paid for a then relatively obscure young writer, Leonard S. Woolf (1880–1969), to spend several months working intensely on two reports on the future of international government.[12] Friends of Woolf, including John Maynard Keynes, warned him away from what they were sure would be tedious work but Woolf took to the task with alacrity.[13] As Shaw detailed in an introduction to the finished work, individual instalments as well as the complete draft were 'subjected to keen discussion' in the Fabian Research Department.[14] They then underwent a great deal of further scrutiny, including at a conference in the summer of 1915 with members of the Bryce Group—a small but influential assemblage of Liberals around Viscount James Bryce that is frequently credited as the intellectual origins of the League of Nations—and 'such other non-Fabian experts as could be secured'.[15] The reports were also made available for public discussion in the *New Statesman*, which had been founded by the Webbs in 1913. The two reports were eventually published together in 1916, when 'skilled discussion and criticism had been carried to exhaustion', under the heading *International Government*.[16] Appended to them was a draft constitution for the future organization of the world, jointly authored by Woolf and Sidney Webb.[17]

International Government laid important groundwork for post-war attempts to remake world order and ought to be read as very much a part of the wider intellectual climate that led to the eventual establishment of the League of Nations in 1920. It was used by the British delegation to the Paris Peace Conference and directly shaped the draft of the Covenant of the League of Nations prepared by Lord Robert Cecil; translations of the

[11] Bernard Shaw, 'Introduction', in L. S. Woolf, *International Government: Two reports by L.S. Woolf Prepared for the Fabian Research Department* (New York, 1916), xviii. All subsequent references to *International Government* refer to this first US edition. Woolf preferred that the first UK edition not include Shaw's introduction.

[12] Leonard Woolf, *Beginning Again: An autobiography of the years 1911 to 1918* (London, 1964), 183-7.

[13] Shaw, 'Introduction', xviii–xix.

[14] Shaw, 'Introduction', xviii–xix.

[15] Shaw, 'Introduction', xviii–xix. See also Beatrice Webb, diary entry for 5 June 1915, in Norman and Jeanne MacKenzie (eds), *The Diary of Beatrice Webb*, 4 vols (London, 1984), vol. 3, 232. For a recent appraisal of the Bryce Group's work in the early years of the war, see Sakiko Kaiga, 'The Use of Force to Prevent War? The Bryce Group's "Proposals for the Avoidance of War," 1914-15', *Journal of British Studies*, 57 (2018), 308–22.

[16] Shaw, 'Introduction'. Shaw's introduction was not published in the first English edition of *International Government*—Woolf feared his work being overshadowed by Shaw's fame.

[17] Woolf and Webb's draft constitution was published as Part III of the first English edition of *International Government* but omitted from most subsequent editions. It is included in Leonard S. Woolf (ed.), *The Framework for a Lasting Peace* (London, 1917), 91–123.

book also appeared across Europe during peace negotiations.[18] It was taken up by the British League of Nations Society, which had been founded in 1915 to campaign for a permanent international organization for the preservation of peace between states, and it was called upon as a reference text by the Foreign Office for years after the war.[19] Despite this ubiquity, and the fact that it is the most significant distillation of Fabian internationalism in this period, it remains largely unexamined. League architect Alfred Zimmern, who would take up the first professorships in International Relations at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, and the University of Oxford, in 1919 and 1930 respectively, noted Woolf's 'masterly analysis' of existing international organs and administrative agencies in such a manner as to suggest *International Government*'s primary value was as a collection of facts; in effect, a scaling up of the Webbs' monumental social scientific investigations into the institutions of local government in Britain rather than a work with any normative ideological character.[20] Among the few scholars that have re-visited the text as part of a broader reappraisal of Woolf's contributions to twentieth-century international political thought, the Fabian genealogy of the text has been deemed of relatively marginal importance.[21] The text is, however, a valuable insight into the foundations on which socialist imperialists built their post-war visions.

In recent years, several important works, including Jeanne Morefield's study of Zimmern and fellow League enthusiast and Oxford classicist, Gilbert Murray, Mark Mazower's exploration of the 'imperial internationalism' of the South African statesmen and architect of the League's mandates system, Jan Christiaan Smuts, and Susan Pedersen's study of the Permanent Mandates Commission, have stressed the legacy of a paternalistic liberal imperialism and its role in shaping the internationalism of the interwar period.[22] Morefield has described Zimmern and Murray's attempt to create a new world without fundamentally disturbing the hierarchies of the old order as the 'liberal muddle'.[23] This genealogy is,

[18] Fred Leventhal and Peter Stansky, *Leonard Woolf: Bloomsbury Socialist* (Oxford, 2019), 96.

[19] Woolf, *Beginning*, 189.

[20] Alfred Zimmern, *The League of Nations and the Rule of Law 1918-1935* (London, 1936), 171–2.

[21] Wilson, *International Theory*, 30–1.

[22] Jeanne Morefield, *Covenants Without Swords. Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire* (Princeton, NJ, 2009); Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton, NJ, 2009); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford, 2015). See also Casper Sylvest, *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880-1930: Making Progress?* (Manchester, 2009), esp. ch. 6, and Mark Mazower, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea* (London, 2012). The foremost intellectual histories of the relationship between liberalism and empire in the nineteenth century remain Uday Singh Mehta, *Liberalism and Empire* (Chicago, 1999) and Jennifer Pitts, *A Turn to Empire* (Princeton, NJ, 2005).

[23] Morefield, *Covenants*, 2. See also Jeanne Morefield, '"A Liberal in a Muddle": Alfred Zimmern on Nationality, Internationality, and Commonwealth', in David Long and Brian C.

however, a complicated one for there were significant tensions and discontinuities within liberal imperial thought in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[24] It is also complicated by the fact that the liberal imperial inheritance, such as it was, was shared with British socialists in the early twentieth-century—indeed, its paternalism, interventionism, and stress on progressive reform was most strongly articulated within groups such as the Fabians, producing a distinctive left-liberalism that was insistently utilitarian in reaction precisely to the perceived Liberal habit of 'muddling through'.[25] Building upon recent moves to pluralize the history of internationalist thought, the provenance of *International Government* as a Fabian text—'being as good as the Fabian Society can at present make it'[26]—and one clearly identified as such by contemporaries, is taken to be important here; this article does not attempt to offer an alternative typology.[27]

Leonard Woolf became in some respects the embodiment of Fabian left-liberalism through his work on *International Government*. Scholarship has frequently located Woolf within a cast of interwar 'idealists' or as part of a 'radical', dissenting tradition in British thought.[28] The former

Schmidt (eds), *Imperialism and Internationalism in the Discipline of International Relations* (Albany, NY, 2005), 93–115.

[24] On discontinuities within British liberal imperialism, see J. A. Hobson, *The Crisis of Liberalism: New Issues of Democracy* (London, 1909), esp. ch. 5. A different kind of discontinuity is stressed by Karuna Mantena in 'The Crisis of Liberal Imperialism', in Bell (ed.), *Victorian Visions* and, more extensively, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism* (Princeton, NJ, 2010). On the 'protean career' of nineteenth-century liberalism, see Martin Hall and John M. Hobson, 'Liberal International Theory: Eurocentric but not always Imperialist?', *International Theory*, 2 (2010), 210–45.

[25] As Schneider argues, 'the watchword of Fabian imperialism was efficiency, and its principal enemy was the Liberal habit of "muddling through"' – 'Fabians', 511. The classic account of left-liberalism in the domestic context is Michael Freeden, *Liberalism Divided: A Study in British Political Thought* (Oxford, 1986).

[26] Shaw, 'Introduction', xix.

[27] For a persuasive reading of Woolf's thought as 'imperial internationalist', see Luke Reader, '"An Alternative to Imperialism": Leonard Woolf, The Labour Party and Imperial Internationalism, 1915-1922', *The International History Review*, 41 (2019), 157–77. On studying socialist internationalist thought on its own terms, see Lucian M. Ashworth, 'Democratic Socialism and International Thought in Interwar Britain', in Ian Hall (ed.), *Radicals and Reactionaries in Twentieth-Century International Thought* (Basingstoke, 2015), 75–100. The vibrancy of socialist internationalist thought in interwar Europe is demonstrated by Talbot C. Imlay, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism. European Socialists and International Politics, 1914-1960* (Oxford, 2018). On pluralizing the history of internationalism more broadly, see indicatively Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin (eds), *Internationalisms. A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge, 2017); Ashley D. Farmer, 'Black Women's Internationalism: A New Frontier in Intellectual History', *Modern Intellectual History* (2021), 1–13; Patricia Owens and Katharina Rietzler (eds), *Women's International Thought: A New History* (Cambridge, 2021). Charlotte Lydia Riley draws attention to an important female Fabian internationalist in 'Writing like a Woman: Rita Hinden and Recovering the Imperial in International Thought', *International Politics Reviews*, 9 (2021), 264–71.

[28] For instance, see Taylor, *Trouble Makers*, 134. The existing International Relations scholarship on Woolf's thought is surveyed by Peter Wilson in *The International Theory of Leonard Woolf: A Study of Twentieth-Century Idealism* (New York, 2003), 4–10. Wilson contends that

designation understates the force and reach of his ideas in the critical years of public debate explored here and into the interwar period, while the latter runs some risk of overstating his break with a longer imperial intellectual heritage. In 1916, the year of *International Government*'s publication, Woolf was moving between the worlds of pre-war liberalism and that of the growing labour and socialist movement. As late as 1912, Woolf was, in his own words, 'a liberal, but not a Liberal, and half way to socialism'. This journey was hastened through work with a poor relief charity in London and studies of the cooperative movement—the latter of which brought him to the Webbs' attentions—rather than any particular interest in the international socialist movement, of which he remained a lifelong sceptic.[29] Woolf's political journey was far from uncommon in this period—both the Labour Party and the more pacifistic Independent Labour Party (ILP) saw an influx of Liberal critics of the government during the war who came increasingly to identify with, and shape the socialism of, their new parties.[30] Privy to this swell in support for socialism among Liberals as well as a war-weary public, the Fabians too, emerged stronger after the war, with over twenty members elected to parliament in 1923 and several in MacDonald's first Labour government in 1924.[31]

Woolf was also moving between two very distinct careers at the time of *International Government*'s publication in 1916—this journey, however, was more unusual. It was only five years since he had resigned from colonial service in Sri Lanka (Ceylon), where he had served since 1904 and risen quickly to the role of Assistant Government Agent of Hambantota District, a position in which he demonstrated a ruthless regard for

Woolf's contributions to the development of interwar IR have been largely undervalued because he has been labelled an 'idealist'. 'Idealism' or 'utopianism' were commonly defined against 'realism' in IR scholarship, a paradigm that owed largely to E. H. Carr's *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (1939). The dichotomy has been shown to be a false one for the interwar period—see Lucian M. Ashworth, 'Where are the Idealists in Interwar International Relations?', *Review of International Studies*, 42 (2006), 291–308, and Casper Sylvest, 'Interwar Internationalism, the British Labour Party, and the Historiography of International Relations', *International Studies Quarterly*, 48 (2004), 409–32. Woolf himself reacted strongly against Carr's framework—see 'Utopia and Reality', *The Political Quarterly*, 11 (1940), 167–82. David Long and Brian C. Schmidt have proposed imperialism and internationalism as a much more central tension in the formation of disciplinary International Relations—see Long and Schmidt (eds), *Imperialism and Internationalism*, esp. 1–21. Peter Wilson's essay on Woolf in this volume rejects an idealist reading but finds traction in Taylor's view that Woolf was a dissenter—see 'Fabian Paternalism and Radical Dissent: Leonard Woolf's Theory of Economic Imperialism', in Long and Schmidt (eds), *Imperialism and Internationalism*, 117–40. For the most recent study of the formation of interwar International Relations, see Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914-1940* (Cambridge, 2022).

[29] Woolf, *Beginning*, 99–114.

[30] Catherine Ann Cline, *Recruits to Labour: The British Labour Party, 1914-1931* (Syracuse, NY, 1963); Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854-1945* (Oxford, 2000), 239–80.

[31] J. M. Winter, *Socialism and the Challenge of the War* (London, 1974), 6.

'keeping order'.[32] He resigned his post in 1911 after meeting Virginia Stephen during a period of leave in London; they married in 1912. Leonard Woolf published that same year a novel drawing on his experiences in Sri Lanka, effectively marking the end of his colonial career.[33] The years immediately after *International Government*'s publication in 1916, meanwhile, saw a series of further notable developments: in 1917, Woolf helped set up the 1917 Club, an important centre for socialist and liberal figures from the Bloomsbury Group and, with Virginia, set-up the Hogarth Press in their home in London. Woolf was by now active within a host of organizations in Britain agitating for a permanent peace, including the League of Nations Society (amalgamated into the hugely influential League of Nations Union in 1918) and the Union of Democratic Control.[34]

While Woolf remained involved with Fabian research on international and imperial questions throughout the interwar period, he found a prominent role for himself in the expanding ranks of the Labour Party soon after the end of the war. Woolf became the first secretary of Labour's Advisory Committee on International Questions (ACIntQ), a body of academics, intellectuals, and political figures established in 1918 to generate expert advice on imperial and international issues for the party, with Sidney Webb serving as its first chairman; when a separate body was established in 1924 to consider imperial questions specifically, the Advisory Committee on Imperial Questions (ACIQ), Woolf would become its secretary, too, holding both positions until 1945. Through the ACIntQ and ACIQ, Woolf helped develop Labour's position on a host of divisive foreign policy issues. While it remains an object of debate whether the Labour Party ever developed a 'socialist' foreign policy distinct from liberal internationalism,[35] modest successes in the international sphere during the Labour minority governments of the 1920s were in part a product of genuine debate within the party, debates in which Fabians played an important role.[36] Woolf also continued to write extensively during these years. Publications on economic imperialism in 1920 in

[32] On Woolf's time in Sri Lanka, see T. J. Barron, 'Before the Deluge: Leonard Woolf in Ceylon', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 6 (1977), 47–63, and Peter Wilson, 'Leonard Woolf: Still Not Out of the Jungle?', *The Round Table*, 97 (2008), 147–60. Woolf claimed in his autobiography that he was only an unconscious, unthinking imperialist—faced with evidence to the contrary, he referred to the Freudian theory of guilt. For a rather uncritical recent account of this period of Woolf's life, see also Leventhal and Stansky, *Leonard Woolf*, 30–48.

[33] Leonard Woolf, *The Village in the Jungle* (London, 1913).

[34] Helen McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations. Democracy, Citizenship, and Internationalism, 1918-48* (Manchester, 2011). On the Union of Democratic Control during the war, see Sally Harris, *Out of Control: British Foreign Policy and the Union of Democratic Control, 1914-1918* (Hull, 1996).

[35] Rhiannon Vickers, *The Labour Party and the World*, 2 vols (Manchester, 2013), vol. 1: *The Evolution of Labour's Foreign Policy, 1900-51*.

[36] Ashworth, 'Democratic Socialism'.

particular (some of which were supported by Virginia Woolf's research), helped establish Woolf as one of Britain's leading anti-imperialist thinkers as early as 1920.[37] Though that label is an ill-fitting one for reasons discussed below, Woolf's dramatic transformation in the span of a decade is testament to the dynamic intellectual climate which produced *International Government* and underscores the importance of both the text and its author.[38]

Taken together, the two halves of *International Government* provide an extensive though not always logically consistent series of reflections on sovereignty, nationality, and self-government. To that extent, although the text purports to only address the question of the growth of and prospects for post-war international government, it is a useful window onto Woolf and the Fabians' views of imperialism as well as internationalism, revealing their deep conceptual imbrication. Of the two parts that constitute *International Government*, the more technocratic second half, wherein Woolf exhaustively catalogued and evaluated existing mechanisms and organizations of inter-state—and frequently non-state—cooperation, has been regarded as the obvious place to begin an examination of Woolf's internationalist thought. Part I, however, comprising largely a history of international co-operation, contains a critical exposition of the historicism upon which Woolf and the Fabians' built their visions for a progressive post-war world. Woolf's presentation of the historical evolution of international law in the nineteenth century, which he takes to be foundational to any understanding of how the world would be pacified after the war, is particularly notable given the tendency of other Fabian texts to focus on the economic aspects of international questions.[39] Historicism took the place of natural law in providing a normative basis for international law from the late nineteenth century.[40] Woolf states at the very outset of *International Government* that he does not wish to touch on 'academic questions' such as whether international law existed, or whether it 'is or is not law'; suffice it to say that the 'whole history of the nineteenth century' proved that it did exist, and that it was of supreme importance.[41] Despite this certainty, the character of that 'law' was unclear. Woolf's subsequent discussion contains a fundamental tension between, on the one hand, a positivist account of the development of international law that draws on the history of Europe's successful management of

[37] The nature of the research undertaken by Virginia Woolf in this period is detailed in Michèle Barrett, 'Virginia Woolf's Research for *Empire and Commerce in Africa* (Leonard Woolf, 1920)', *Woolf Studies Annual*, 19 (2013), 83–122.

[38] Wilson, 'Jungle', esp. 156–7, and Reader, 'An Alternative to Imperialism'.

[39] Woolf, *International Government*, 11.

[40] Casper Sylvest, 'The foundations of Victorian international law', in Bell (ed.), *Victorian Visions*, and Sylvest, *British Liberal Internationalism*, ch. 3. See also Antony Anghie, *Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law* (Cambridge, 2005), esp. ch. 2.

[41] Woolf, *International Government*, 11–12.

'disorder', and, on the other, an insistence that the very idea of the independent, sovereign state—the lynchpin of positivist legal thought—was not a secure or rational basis for the development of a stable future international order.

II

Woolf's history of international law and the development of 'international authority' focused in large part on congresses and conferences. Collectively, these bore 'strong resemblance' to 'rudimentary legislatures' and might suggest what the prospects were for a post-war international organization to keep peace.[42] Woolf took the Congress of Vienna in 1815 as an origin point, for this was when, 'for the first time in history, an international law ... was made by the nations of Europe in general assembly', an assembly 'undoubtedly conceived as, in a sense, a Parliament of Nations settling the Constitution of Europe'.[43] Though Woolf saw in the Congress the start to a new kind of world historical institution, he did not regard it as an unalloyed success;[44] rather than work towards a 'general association' of nations or a confederation in the years that followed, Europe fell under the 'hegemony of the four great Powers, bound by alliance to preserve the *status quo*'.[45] By contrast, the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, infamous for the comprehensive partitioning of Africa at the height of the European 'Scramble', elicited more sanguine remarks: this conference may not have averted the 'subsequent tragedy' of that 'unhappy' continent but it was nevertheless the case that the 'not altogether unsuccessful' object of the powers—including 'all the great colonizing and acquisitive Powers'—'was to lay down general principles of international conduct in one of the least-exploited parts of the world, so that the dangers of friction and rivalry from its exploitation might be reduced to a minimum'.[46] In the Berlin Conference, Woolf saw European imperial interests collectively appraised, negotiated, and ultimately settled along a new and more economically liberal footing. Such a model might be replicated across the 'uncivilized' world at large:

> No one who reads the Final Act of the Conference can doubt that if its provisions were extended to all the 'colonies,' and 'suzerainties,' and 'spheres of influence,' of civilized Powers in uncivilized parts of the earth, one at least of the greatest menaces to the peace of Europe would be abolished. With free access to the flags of all nations, with complete liberty of commerce, with no concession of commercial monopolies

[42] Woolf, *International Government*, 26.
[43] Woolf, *International Government*, 26, 31.
[44] Woolf, *International Government*, 27.
[45] Woolf, *International Government*, 31.
[46] Woolf, *International Government*, 27–8.

> and privileges, we should hear less of Far Eastern Questions, of the Partition of China, of Persia and Bagdad [sic] and Morocco.[47]

Woolf acknowledged that in significant parts of the world imperial interests had taken on the form of national questions and could not be therefore easily reduced to a matter of 'liberty of commerce'.[48] While a permanent conference might be established to deliberate upon the 'commercial relations of European states in Africa and Asia', it was less clear what should become of disputes between, for instance, Bosnia and Herzegovina. If that region—which the 'Turk could in the past plead' was a 'domestic question to be settled between him and the inhabitants'—was to become a subject of international legislation, so might the question of Irish Home Rule, or British India, or Finns in the Russian Empire.[49] Woolf's attempt to resolve the tensions between the domestic, the international, and the imperial was ultimately pragmatic and narrow; a question was 'international' if the peace of Europe was at stake.[50]

Woolf's narrative repeatedly returned to the decades following 1815 to demonstrate this 'international' spirit in action, detailing at some length events concerning the Ottoman Empire in particular and thereby indicating that it had played a foundational role in the emergence of truly international system. In 1815, for instance, there was no doubt that Greece was 'a domestic question to be settled between Greek and Turk'. But in subsequent years, the isolated units of European nations came to feel that they formed 'a real society'.[51] With the Greek Revolt against the Ottomans in 1821, and a new concern to limit Russian 'interference' in Turkey and expansion in Asia (what would come to be known as the Eastern Question), international politics sprang into action and eventually all the great powers came to intervene in the conflict. It was Russia itself, in Woolf's account, that proposed collective intervention through a conference of powers; 'Turkey logically protested'. There were, according to Woolf, two ways of proceeding at this point: 'First, each Power, including Turkey, might [have been] treated as an isolated sovereign Power. In that case Turkey had to settle with the Greeks by herself, though, of course, any other Power might make any demand of her which she thought she could enforce by arms.' Alternatively, 'the European Powers might say to Turkey: "You form part of a society of nations. Your internal affairs are already endangering peace. We and you will now send representatives to a conference, and that conference will decide for us and for you how these affairs are to be settled".'[52]

[47] Woolf, *International Government*, 28.
[48] Woolf, *International Government*, 32.
[49] Woolf, *International Government*, 33–40.
[50] Wilson, *International Theory*, 60–7, has detailed some of the tensions and logical contradictions of Woolf's writing.
[51] Woolf, *International Government*, 41.
[52] Woolf, *International Government*, 41–2.

In the event, Woolf claims, the powers tried to combine the two methods. 'Russia, France, and Great Britain [...] under cover of the specious term "mediation," professed to deal with Turkey as a sovereign Power' in the 1827 Treaty of London.[53] What they actually did was to form themselves 'into a kind of legislative committee, and at a series of conferences, held off and on for ten years, settled the affairs of Greeks and Turks, and compelled both parties to accept the settlement'. In so doing, they 'transformed a Turkish province into an independent kingdom [Greece], they selected and gave it a king, and defined its boundaries'. The powers destroyed the Turkish fleet to ensure compliance with their decisions, all the while maintaining that they were not at war with Turkey; the powers were simply enforcing the terms of an 'international' agreement.[54] At several moments in the half-century thereafter, first the three powers, and then a more expansive group of European states, arrogated the right to 'arrange' the affairs of Greece and Turkey. The European powers may have still insisted they were merely 'mediating' between two isolated sovereign states, writes Woolf, but 'when one looks beneath the verbiage of protocols and treaties, one sees clearly that there was the spirit of a new system of international society'; the conferences were 'quasi-legislative', and they managed to compel Greece and Turkey to accept international decisions on the whole without resort to violence.[55] For the most part, moreover, they had done so without the involvement of any representatives from either state.[56]

When the provinces of Bosnia and Herzegovina rebelled later in the century, international conferences were once more at the fore. A conference of powers in Istanbul in 1876 produced terms that Turkey refused to recognize, at which point Russia threatened to go to war unless the powers were prepared to enforce those terms. Woolf writes along similar lines again: 'Clearly the Conference of Constantinople [of 1876] regarded itself as an international legislative organ, and was prepared to go to the lengths of creating an international executive and an international armed force in order to ensure that its decisions should be carried out'; clearly, when Turkey refused, the Powers ought to have insisted again that it was being treated as 'one of a group of European states' and that, 'We—that is, Europe—have decided that you must take these steps to put your house in order, and we are now going to use every means in our power to see that you do'.[57] The powers failed to prevent Russia going to war with Turkey in 1876 but they insisted upon a 'European settlement' at the

[53] Woolf, *International Government*, 42.
[54] Woolf, *International Government*, 42–43.
[55] Woolf, *International Government*, 45–6.
[56] Woolf, *International Government*.
[57] Woolf, *International Government*, 49–50.

subsequent Congress of Berlin in 1878.[58] 'The failure', then, 'was more apparent than real' for it proved the general principle. Woolf presented Russia as a willing participant in the 'internationalization' of the conflict, eliding the fact that it was precisely because Russia had forced its own peace upon Turkey through the Treaty of San Stefano several months earlier that the 1878 Congress intervened, under the tacit threat of war, to restore Turkish power in Europe to serve as a bulwark against Russian expansionism.[59] E. H. Carr, writing on the eve of the Second World War, would refer to the 1878 Congress ironically as 'the largest operation of "peaceful change" in the nineteenth century'.[60]

Woolf derived from the history of Europe's forceful if fitful management of Turkey's 'disordered' empire after 1815 a normative theory of how 'international' society ought to function. One might think this an inauspicious origin story for internationalism. And yet the rest of the text makes clear that it was in fact a fitting one, for Woolf considered 'the legal, political, and diplomatic theories of the independence and sovereignty of States' to be 'illogical' and 'destructive of the best things in society'.[61] The 'mysterious sovereignty of sovereign Powers' was something that 'practically everyone, from Foreign Secretaries to public-house politicians, [was] obsessed by' but any kind of conference 'which is to decide things' required the submission of one nation to the express will of others; 'we do not cease to be a nation, or, at any rate, a nation with "national honor," because we make that submission'.[62]

International Government was, accordingly, deeply ambivalent about nationality. Where prominent liberals such as Zimmern married internationalism with an abiding commitment to the idea of nationality,[63] Woolf regarded the latter with great suspicion, perceiving it as primarily a justification for the demand for sovereign independence. Such sovereignty often concealed what was in fact often a medley of dangerous nationalities and the total absence of local self-government, which had been a frequent cause of recent wars.[64] Australia, for instance, enjoyed greater safety within the British Empire than Belgium or even France despite the former not enjoying the 'mysterious and intangible privilege' of independent sovereignty that the latter did.[65] That 'a consciousness of

[58] Woolf, *International Government*, 48–9.
[59] Woolf, *International Government*, 49.
[60] E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939* [1939] (London, 2016), 197.
[61] Woolf, *International Government*, 344–50, quotation at 349.
[62] Woolf, *International Government*, 38–9.
[63] Morefield, '"A Liberal in a Muddle"'. See also Casper Sylvest, 'James Bryce and the Two Faces of Nationalism', in Ian Hall and Lisa Hill (eds), *British International Thinkers from Hobbes to Namier* (New York, 2009); Georgios Giannakopoulos, 'A World Safe for Empires? A. J. Toynbee and the Internationalization of Self-determination in the East (1912-1922),' *Global Intellectual History*, 6 (2021), 484–505.
[64] Woolf, *International Government*, 125–6 and 366.
[65] Woolf, *International Government*, 367.

nationality and patriotism exists' was not to say that they were 'either admirable or will continue so to exist for all eternity'.[66] Moreover, the notion that nationality required independent government for its expression was a folly. Contrary to what lawyers and diplomats would have people believe, the desire to manage one's own affairs did not require 'independence of government'.[67] Indeed, the 'rigid theory of the independence and sovereignty of states'[68] was an unhelpful 'abstraction' that was 'incompatible with modern society', the development of 'international intercourse and social progress', and 'cosmopolitan law-making'.[69] Even more insistently, Woolf argued that 'to make a legal or a patriotic fetish of independence is to turn away from the clear path of human progress and to make periodic disasters certain'.[70] Woolf's reasoning was in part informed by a consideration of class interests—nationality was often a tool for a narrow ruling or capitalist class to oppose 'those of the unpropertied, powerless, or working class', he argued; a 'sane and practical internationalism implies the regulation of national groups through organs of government'.[71]

Woolf's account did not explicitly suggest that the theory of sovereignty was more of an 'abstraction' for some parts of the world than others. And yet his historical account was of an international law formed largely in unequal relations between European powers on the one hand, and quasi-European and non-European others. Turkey, which Woolf in fact acknowledged as a member of a European society of states,[72] was repeatedly subjected to 'international government' rather than a participant in it. Woolf deplored the 'specious term "mediation"' precisely because it treated Turkey as an independent, sovereign state. Woolf's treatment of unambiguously non-European states, such as Morocco, bore out this dynamic more clearly—he hailed, for instance, the resolution of the 1905 Morocco crisis through the Conference of Algeciras in 1906 as one of the clearest cases of international law's success to date.[73] Woolf's appraisal of the Final Act of the conference, which established that no single European power could exploit the state but rather all the great powers could equally benefit from an 'open door' policy, thereby relieving a potential source of European war, is testament to the fact that positivist scrutiny of international treaties often had the paradoxical effect, as Antony Anghie has argued, of erasing the non-European side of the treaty by centring the text of the treaty rather than the circumstances in which the treaty had

[66] Woolf, *International Government*, 348.
[67] Woolf, *International Government*, 350.
[68] Woolf, *International Government*, 345.
[69] Woolf, *International Government*, 267.
[70] Woolf, *International Government*, 363.
[71] Woolf, *International Government*, 355–6.
[72] Woolf, *International Government*, 49–50.
[73] Woolf, *International Government*, 63.

been arrived at.[74] In reality, even where such treaties nominally recognised the sovereignty of non-European states, they almost always entailed the latter's 'alienation and subordination rather than empowerment'.[75]

Woolf was most pointed on the subject of the sovereignty of 'small states'; nothing would be more foolish than for such states to jeopardize the creation of an international system because of some 'semi-technical, wholly unreasonable shibboleth of national honor or national sovereignty'.[76] The Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, for instance, convened to discuss and agree limitations on armaments, had failed because the British Empire and Luxembourg were treated as equal members of a society of states: 'this mystic equality of things radically unequal' made a reasonable settlement impossible.[77] Where this left colonial territories that were not even members of such a society was unclear. Woolf returned, obliquely, to this question towards the end of *International Government*. What, he asked, was to prevent an international authority voting away the claim of the British Empire to Ireland, or the German Empire to Poland? His answer was a rather strained one: by defining 'those questions upon which States could agree to be bound by an organ of International Government', and 'excluding any which would affect the independence or territorial integrity of a State'.[78] This logic affirmed that European empires, precisely through a claim to sovereignty, lay beyond the realm of international justiciability while providing no indication of how dependent territories might hope to achieve their own independence.

It is worth examining the extent to which the legal history presented in *International Government* was a distinct one. In some respects, Woolf anticipated later criticisms of both the pre-war period's apparent attachment to a statist positivism in which the sovereign state was the only 'scientific' foundation for international relations, and what was described as a rival liberal nationalist international law rooted in a 'vulgar' or romanticized idea of nationality.[79] As noted above, Woolf's seemingly radical challenge to statist positivism failed to acknowledge how differentially applied this principle had been.[80] As Martti Koskenniemi has argued, late Victorian international law was much less concerned with the question of state sovereignty than was once assumed; the exception to this lay in

[74] Anghie, *Imperialism*, 71–2.
[75] Anghie, *Imperialism*, 105.
[76] Woolf, *International Government*, 93.
[77] Woolf, *International Government*, 118.
[78] Woolf, *International Government*, 363.
[79] Nathaniel Berman, '"But the Alternative is Despair": European Nationalism and the Modernist Renewal of International Law', *Harvard Law Review*, 106 (1993), 1792–903, at 1800–808; Anghie, *Imperialism*, 123–7.
[80] Woolf, *International Government*, 349.

Europe's assertions of its own sovereignty in relations with the non-European world.[81] Indeed, the most enduring legal lesson of the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 and the partitioning of Africa was that Europeans had the unmitigated right to decide the affairs of non-Europeans—a lesson that was borne out by Woolf's historical account.[82] His critique of nationality was more consistent and arguably more far-reaching, for he was clear that nationality was a vague and dangerous basis upon which to constitute international order even within the limits of Europe.[83] The emergence of the Greek nation state, for instance, frequently taken to be the paradigmatic case of a nineteenth-century independence movement—a culturally distinct European nation overthrowing the Ottoman imperial yoke in a romantic act of self-determination—was presented by Woolf as the result of a 'quasi-legislative' process in which both Greeks and Turks played no part.[84]

Woolf's account was a recognizably positivist legal history in that he approached the question of deriving order from chaos as a scientific enquiry.[85] He established salient facts, classified information, and created an overarching coherence. He did not assume there were transcendent laws as natural law theory did, but fundamental principles nevertheless structured developments in his analysis. *International Government* therefore also reflected the internal tension at the heart of much legal positivism between its 'historicist' and its 'scientific' impulses—between the desire to chart the history of the progressive emergence of fundamental organizing principles and to present those principles as beyond history and not subject to 'flux and contingency'.[86] To some extent Woolf's historical account is closer to the former approach since he affords a significant degree of importance to, for instance, the effects of war and great power decision-making. At the same time, Woolf repeatedly stresses that European states often failed to express the nature of their actions correctly and thus recognize the significance of what they were doing, thus implying the existence of fundamental underlying meanings and processes that simply awaited articulation. This might be regarded as a productive ambigity, for it meant *International Government* could be read by contemporaries as a descriptive account of the nature and historical evolution of sovereignty and nationality even while offering a highly prescriptive commentary on it.

[81] Martti Koskenniemi, *The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law 1870-1960* (Cambridge, 2001), 2, 98–178.
[82] Koskenniemi, 121–7; Anghie, *Imperialism*, 90–7.
[83] Woolf, *International Government*, 349.
[84] The fact that Woolf was a lifelong Hellenophile makes this point all the more striking. For a recent account of the impact of the Greek Revolution on the European imagination, see Mark Mazower, *The Greek Revolution: 1821 and the Making of Modern Europe* (London, 2021).
[85] Anghie, *Imperialism*, ch. 2.
[86] Anghie, *Imperialism*, ch. 2.

As Anghie and others have argued, a 'dynamic of difference'—the gap between the universal and civilized and the particular and uncivilized—animated the development of the doctrine of sovereignty in international law in the nineteenth century.[87] Discussion of the ability of 'barbarous' and 'uncivilized' Asiatic states such as the Ottomans to engage in reciprocal relations with European states emerged in the eighteenth century, coterminous with a discourse of 'Oriental despotism'. The construction of racial and civilizational hierarchies within international law undercut claims to its universality from its very inception; Jennifer Pitts has described this as a 'parochial universalism' that took a 'its own local principles' as 'universally obligating' solutions to problems of order.[88] Even after the Ottoman Empire became part of the European system in 1856, it was indelibly marked as outside of European society by its Islamic, Asiatic character. Inclusion in the European legal universe on fundamentally unequal terms was, in turn, instrumental to its further subordination, demonstrated in the expansion of European extraterritoriality and episodic 'humanitarian' intervention in the nineteenth century.[89]

While Woolf's work uses the terms 'civilized' and 'uncivilized', it is not the case that the exposition of *International Government* rests upon this distinction. Nevertheless, the very choice of the Ottoman Empire as the prime example of the application of international law was drawing upon a legal tradition that saw the civilizational distinction as axiomatic. It is difficult to reconstruct this genealogy precisely since Woolf did not in general cite his sources, which he retrospectively attributed to the fact that there were few works of reference on the subject at the time and much of his research had involved poring over obscure blue books and institutional reports.[90] He did, however, note the work of T. E. Holland, Chichele Professor of International Law and History at Oxford from 1874 to 1910. Where Woolf attributed European intervention to the collective fear that 'one of the diseased or atrophied extremities of the Turkish Empire will set the rest of Europe fighting one another',[91] Holland's *The European Concert in the Eastern Question* (1885) noted the gradual growth in sympathy for the subject races of the Turkish Empire (namely, Christians) and the fear of Russian expansion. This admixture of concerns over internal misrule and international instability resulted in 'a remarkable series of treaties' that demonstrated the gradual assumption by the powers of a 'collective authority' to 'regulate the disintegration of

[87] Anghie, *Imperialism*, 52–61.
[88] Jennifer Pitts, *Boundaries of the International: Law and Empire* (Cambridge, MA, 2018), esp. at 6.
[89] Turan Kayaoğlu, *Legal Imperialism: Sovereignty and Extraterritoriality in Japan, the Ottoman Empire, and China* (Cambridge, 2010), esp. ch. 4.
[90] Woolf, *Beginning*, 187–8.
[91] Woolf, *International Government*, 51.

Turkey'.[92] The Turkish Empire was 'placed, as it were, under the tutelage of Europe'.[93] Such historicism underpinned belief in the rightful expansion of European legal sovereignty into the Ottoman world.[94] In Woolf's account some three decades later, Holland's briefly sketched historical arc was reaffirmed and substantially expanded, though the subject now was more closely focused on order rather than 'tutelage'.

A particularly racially charged commentary on the legal condition of the Ottoman Empire can be found in the work of James Lorimer, Regius Chair of Public Law and the Law of Nature and Nations at the University of Edinburgh. Lorimer called in 1876 for Europe to give up recognition of the 'phantom state' of Turkey and for the wholesale 'denationalisation of Constantinople'. The fiction of Turkish sovereignty, he argued, was an embarrassment to Europe.[95] While severe in its articulation, this was hardly a taboo idea in Victorian thought. Woolf's *International Government* effectively transmitted this late nineteenth-century legal consensus about the condition of Turkey, the fiction of its sovereignty, and the ambivalent legal status of the non-European world more widely, into the internationalist debates of the 1910s even while it claimed to stand against all abstract applications of the sovereignty doctrine. As the following section explores, Woolf, too, would soon advance his own plans for a 'denationalised' Istanbul, freed of the 'alien Turk'.

III

Alfred Zimmern might have thought *International Government* a 'masterly analysis' but writing in 1936 as the first Montagu Burton Professor of International Relations at the University of Oxford, he slighted Woolf and Webb's draft constitution, which was appended to the first English edition, as an overly modest 'gas and water internationalism'.[96] The document itself was, in retrospect, one of the least revolutionary of the many world-making schemes devised during the First World War, on the whole eschewing the radical for what seemed practicable. No doubt aware of and sensitive to this criticism, Woolf would reproach the Webbs for the 'dangerous narrowness' of their interests in an essay on their political thought written in the late 1940s, shortly after their deaths. Sidney Webb, Woolf said, had been interested in the structure and functions of the proposed League but wholly disinterested in conceptual

[92] T. E. Holland, *The European Concert in the Eastern Question* (Oxford, 1885), 1–3.
[93] Holland, *European Concert*, 2.
[94] Koskenniemi, *Gentle Civilizer*; Pitts, *Boundaries*, chs 5–6.
[95] James Lorimer, 'Of the Denationalisation of Constantinople and its Devotion to International Purposes', lecture delivered in 1876, in *Studies. National and International* (Edinburgh, 1890), 121–31.
[96] Zimmern, *League of Nations*, 169–73, quotation at 171.

questions such as the problem of sovereignty.[97] These reflections go some way towards explaining why the Fabian draft plan did not in fact do very much to try to get beyond the 'abstraction' of sovereignty and depended entirely on the coming together of 'independent sovereign States'.[98] Woolf might have noted, however, that at the time of writing *International Government*, he, too, had felt that the idea of state sovereignty had acquired too great a 'theoretical sacredness' to be transcended at present.[99] He had also expressed an interest in producing a practical text to counteract 'a certain vagueness' that permeated other plans for the post-war world.[100]

Soon after the publication *of International Government*, these plans began to take on more discernible form through the declaration of various Allied war aims. Britain's socialists shaped the tenor of much of the discussion—the Labour Party had agreed a memorandum of war aims in December 1917; with some reworking, the memorandum was subsequently submitted to the Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist conference that met in Paris in February 1918 and was approved by its delegates, underscoring the dramatic rise of Labour within the International during the war and especially after the Russian Revolution in 1917.[101] Labour's war aims not only influenced fellow European socialists but were also explicitly incorporated into those declared by Prime Minister David Lloyd George to be the aims of the Liberal-led coalition government in a speech to a meeting of trade unionists in January 1918. Lloyd George's war aims in turn closely foreshadowed President Woodrow Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' speech delivered before the United States Congress mere days later.[102]

These wartime declarations, while still vague about the practical instruments of international government, did share certain important assumptions about the settlement to come. There was broad agreement on the importance of establishing freedom of the seas and waterways in general, and internationalizing the Straits—that is to say, the Bosporus

[97] Leonard Woolf, 'Political Thought and the Webbs', in Margaret Cole (ed.), *The Webbs and Their Work* (London, 1949), 251–64, esp. 259–62.

[98] 'Articles suggested for adoption by an international conference at the termination of the present war' by The International Agreements Committee of the Fabian Research Department, contained in Woolf, *International Government*, 371–410.

[99] Woolf, *International Government*, 111–2.

[100] Woolf, *International Government*, 3; Woolf, 'Political Thought', 261.

[101] 'Memorandum on War Aims', 28 December 1917, Appendix I in Arthur Henderson, *The Aims of Labour* (New York, 1919); Inter-Allied Labour and Socialist Conference, *Memorandum on War Aims* (London, 1918). The Inter-Allied Socialist Conference first met in London in 1915, and was attended by representatives from Belgium, France, Russia and, among British attendees, members of the Labour Party, the ILP, the British Socialist Party (which became the British Communist Party in 1920), as well as the Fabian Society. On the 1918 conference, see Imlay, *Socialist Internationalism*, 34–40.

[102] David Lloyd George, *British War Aims* (London, 1918); 'President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points Speech, 8 January 1919', accessible at https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp.

and the Dardanelles, which connected the Black Sea to the Aegean and Mediterranean—in particular. As the closure of the Dardanelles both in 1912 and 1914 had demonstrated, the extent of Turkish sovereignty over this narrow but vital commercial waterway—and the rights of neutral shipping to pass through it in times of war—was far from clear. It was frequently suggested in this period that the Turkish closure of the Straits in 1914 had single-handedly prolonged the war by two years; the Entente powers' attempts to take control of the Straits in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915–1916 had proven to be a devastating military failure with enormous loss of life on both sides.

On territorial questions, there was rather more ambiguity. Socialists insisted that the war should not be an imperialist, annexationist one and saw this as consistent with the assumption that vast territories, including those of the Ottoman Empire, might fall under international control after the war. Labour's war aims referred to the untenable rule of 'the Turkish hordes' and the need for the self-determination of oppressed peoples under its rule—if the latter 'do not feel themselves able to settle their own destinies', they should be placed under the administration of a commission of the League of Nations.[103] Lloyd George's war aims and Wilson's Fourteen Points largely concurred. Labour's war aims said nothing of the fate of the Turkish population specifically; Wilson's speech included diplomatic references to assuring the 'secure sovereignty' of the 'Turkish race', though that sovereignty was left geographically undefined.[104] Lloyd George's declaration went furthest in stating that the Allies did 'not challenge the maintenance of the Turkish Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race with its capital at Constantinople'.[105]

Scholarship on the mandatory period has understandably tended to focus on the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire after the war, which fell under formal mandatory rule and where, therefore, legal, political, and institutional innovations were most readily apparent. These territories and populations were subjected to elaborate strategies of reorganization in the interwar period that included partitioning and population resettlement.[106] Less well noted is that the Supreme Allied Council's discussion of the future of Turkish rule in Anatolia, including a potential American mandate over Armenia, and the fate of 'European Turkey', proceeded in parallel in the year and a half before the terms of the Turkish settlement were formally announced in the spring of 1920.[107] Debates

[103] Henderson, *Aims of Labour*, 86–7.
[104] 'Fourteen Points', Art. XII.
[105] Lloyd George, *British War Aims*, Art. XII.
[106] On the latter, see Laura Robson, *States of Separation: Transfer, Partition, and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (Oakland, CA, 2017).
[107] For the genesis and foundering of the proposed Armenian mandate, see Charlie Laderman, *Sharing the Burden: The Armenian Question, Humanitarian Intervention, and Anglo-American Visions of Global Order* (Oxford, 2019), ch. 5.

were so extensive during this period that by mid-1919, both Wilson and Lloyd George admitted they had forgotten they had made any promises not to destroy Turkish sovereignty just the previous year, indicating how tentative those commitments had been.[108] The outlook for Istanbul in particular seemed assured; it had been promised to Russia during an extraordinary period of secret diplomacy between Britain, France and Russia in 1914–1915,[109] but when the Bolsheviks renounced all Tsarist territorial claims in 1917, there was a widespread assumption that the capital of the Ottoman Empire would be placed under some form of international control as part of a Straits mandate. Occupied by Allied forces following the Armistice of Mudros in late 1918, Istanbul was already effectively under British control—it did not require an enormous leap to imagine its further internationalization. In the House of Commons in 1920, speaking as the terms of the peace treaty with Turkey were still being finalized, Lloyd George confirmed that he had only said he would leave Istanbul in Turkish hands in 1918 as a calculated move to impress upon his trade unionist audience the non-annexationist nature of the war, and to boost the recruitment of Muslim soldiers in India, who held Istanbul in high esteem as the seat of the Caliphate.[110] Indeed, Lloyd George had long been a virulent critic of Turkish rule and political and intellectual opinion in Britain in these years was largely in favour of 'expelling the Turk from Europe', an opinion compounded by reports of atrocities committed by the Committee of Union and Progress against the Ottoman Empire's Armenian Christian population during the war.[111]

The establishment of an extensive mandatory system that absorbed the territories and colonies of the defeated Ottoman and German Empires and placed them under the administration of the victorious powers was the chief instrument by which the international structures of the interwar period preserved and expanded the reach of European imperialism in the twentieth century.[112] The belief that these colonies needed to be held in 'trust' and that 'non-adult' peoples required varying degrees of tutelage

[108] *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States: The Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, 13 vols (Washington, D.C., 1942–1947), vol. 5, doc. 74 (henceforth FRUS). They were reminded of these statements by the official Indian delegation, led by the British Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu – see FRUS, vol. 5, doc. 72.

[109] William A. Renzi, 'Great Britain, Russia, and the Straits, 1914-1915', *Journal of Modern History*, 42, 1 (1970), 1–20.

[110] See Commons sitting of 26 February 1920, *Hansard (Houses of Parliament Debates) 1803-2005* (ProQuest, 2018), series 5, vol. 125, cc. 1949–2060, at c. 1962.

[111] On this intellectual climate, see Michele Tusan, '"Crimes Against Humanity": Human Rights, the British Empire and the Origins of the Response to the Armenian Genocide', *American Historical Review*, 119 (2014), 47–77.

[112] See, indicatively, contributions to 'AHR Reflections: One Hundred Years of Mandates', *American Historical Review*, 124 (2019). For an incisive survey of some of the most recent works on the Middle Eastern mandates in particular, see Simon Jackson, 'From Beirut to Berlin (via Geneva): The New International History, Middle East Studies and the League of Nations', *Contemporary European History*, 27 (2018), 708–26. Recent works have also,

before they could 'stand alone', as expressed in Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, was redolent of certain nineteenth-century liberal justifications of empire. The developmentalist logic of the mandates system had a particular resonance for Fabian socialists such as Woolf, who considered the paternalistic responsibility to 'tutor' colonized peoples a serious one,[113] but it went hand in hand with the other key idea behind socialist support for internationalizing territory: regulating access to and the cultivation of lands and economic resources in order to prevent imperial conflict. It had been stated bluntly in *Fabianism and the Empire* that 'the partition of the greater part of the globe' was now 'only a question of time',[114] and that the great powers had the right to set up 'settled government' for the purposes of trade and commercial relations where 'native government' was incapable of doing so, for this was the irresistible expansion of 'commercial civilisation'. This view did not come under sustained scrutiny during the war, though socialists spoke increasingly of international councils and commissions to oversee such work rather than the great powers.

Hobson, who joined the pacificist Union of Democratic Control during the First World War and would join the Independent Labour Party in 1919, continued to argue for the 'partitioning' of the 'exploitable' parts of the world in his wartime writing.[115] In *Towards International Government* (1915), Hobson reiterated that it was competition between commercial and financial interests 'organised upon a "national" basis', and their wielding of influence over the foreign policy of governments, that had played a large part in producing 'dangerous international situations' that imperilled world peace.[116] An 'International Council' entrusted to prevent rather than simply settle such issues was needed, particularly given that 'Asia, Africa, and South America still contain[ed] huge undeveloped areas of economic exploitation'.[117] Hobson demanded a 'constructive policy': 'A mere doctrine of "hands off," urged sometimes by Socialists in their capacity of anti-capitalists... is not seriously defensible, on grounds either of ethics or of practical politics'.[118] 'The occupiers of a land containing rich resources which can be developed for the benefit of mankind have no "right" to withhold them. If they cannot or do not desire to develop them themselves,' he continued, 'they cannot properly resent the

however, noted significant departures from imperial practices, stressing in particular the novelty of formalizing mandatory powers' obligations—see esp. Pedersen, *Guardians*.

[113] Wilson, 'Fabian Paternalism'.

[114] Shaw, *Fabianism and the Empire*, 3.

[115] J. A. Hobson, *Towards International Government* (New York, 1915), esp. 127–48. See also Peter Cain, 'J.A. Hobson, Cobdenism, and the Radical Theory of Economic Imperialism, 1898-1914', *Economic History Review*, 31, 4 (1978), 565–84.

[116] Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 138, citing H. N. Brailsford, *The War of Steel and Gold* (1914).

[117] Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 139.

[118] Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 139.

claim of outsiders to come in and do this work'. The question was not whether intervention was permissible but what 'governing principles' should regulate such 'justifiable interference'.[119] Hobson dealt summarily with the potential that such interference would lead to further exploitation and abuses of power; as a genuine international spirit developed, he argued, these abuses would eventually simply disappear. While Hobson's paternalism towards and racialization of 'backward' peoples has been rightly placed within a liberal internationalist tradition,[120] his interventionist argument should also be read alongside discussions within the Fabian Society and other socialist organizations in this period. Hobson's analysis dovetails, for instance, with Woolf's account of the achievements of the Berlin Conference of 1884–5 and the desirability of opening the rest of the 'uncivilized' world to the 'liberty of commerce' in *International Government*, published a year after Hobson's *Towards International Government*.

Labour's war aims in 1917 stopped short of justifying intervention to secure access to resources but did urge 'the utmost possible development by appropriate Government action of the resources of every country [. . .] for the benefit of the world'.[121] When, then, Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations stipulated that the mandatory powers were responsible for securing 'equal opportunities for the trade and commerce of other Members of the League', it would have resonated with many socialists in Britain.[122] While the eventual mandates systems fell short of its initial promise for some socialists by awarding mandates to governments rather than to the direct control of the League itself, this did not compromise the mandates project for the majority.[123] Woolf himself was certainly disappointed by the apportioning of mandates to individual powers—he noted as early as 1920's *Economic Imperialism* that the Great Powers had no intention of honestly carrying out 'the spirit or the letter' of Article 22 and had already reduced the League and the mandates system to a 'sham'—but he remained nonetheless a strong believer in the economic potential of the mandatory system and the 'new era' it might augur in 'relations between Asia and Africa and western civilisation'.[124] In *Mandates and Empire*, a treatise written for the League of Nations Union

[119] Hobson, *Towards International Government*, 139–40.

[120] David Long, 'Paternalism and the Internationalization of Imperialism: J. A. Hobson on the International Government of the "Lower Races"', in Long and Schmidt (eds), *Imperialism and Internationalism*, 71–91.

[121] Henderson, *Aims of Labour*, 87–8.

[122] Covenant of the League of Nations (1920), accessible at https://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp.

[123] On the range of Labour positions in relation to the League of Nations, see Lucian M. Ashworth, 'Rethinking a Socialist Foreign Policy: The British Labour Party and International Relations Experts 1918 to 1931,' *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 75 (2009), 30–48.

[124] Leonard Woolf, *Economic Imperialism* (London, 1920), 104–6. See also Leonard Woolf, *Empire and Commerce in Africa* (London, 1920).

in 1920, he heralded the 'revolution[ary]' potential of Article 22.[125] In a pamphlet outlining what Labour's international economic policy should be, published in the same year, Woolf stressed the importance of an 'economic League of Nations' that could foster cooperative trade and diminish protectionist barriers, but also conduct the sales or leases of land, concessions, mining rights and so forth, especially in 'non-adult' and mandatory territories, with safeguards instituted to prevent the exploitation of native labour.[126] Woolf saw untold and expansive possibilities in the mandates system—he held that even a relatively 'civilised' state such as China, which could 'probably' govern itself as an independent power, would benefit from becoming a League mandate. China, like Turkey, was a state that had long tested the limits of the law of nations.[127] Woolf thought a mandate for China might undo the 'anarchy' caused by its economic exploitation by European powers in the nineteenth century by investing a significant degree of control over its financial re-organisation in the League.[128]

Istanbul was a somewhat unusual case within this broader context—it did not have exploitable resources of its own to speak of, but it was a major commercial crossroad. Many socialists considered it a locus of intrigue for capitalist interests (especially German and French) that sought to exploit the resources of the empire either through attaining sole control over it themselves or through retaining a weakened, biddable Turkish Government. An international 'mandate for Constantinople' might therefore protect both the capital and the wider empire from predation by a single power. For a very brief period some Ottoman politicians and even Turkish Nationalists, conscious of the Empire's unequal position in the European society of nations and taking Wilson's pledge to assure a 'secure sovereignty' in the Fourteen Points seriously, also cautiously entertained the idea of an American mandate over the whole of Anatolia as a means to defend against the further erosion of its independence.[129] Woolf was a strong advocate for an international mandate over Istanbul but, as the preceding discussion

[125] Leonard Woolf, *Mandates and Empire* (London, 1920), 5.

[126] Leonard Woolf, *International Economic Policy* (London, 1920), 7. The immediate aftermath of the First World War saw a vast expansion in developmentalist discourses, though this was still as likely be articulated through imperial rather than strictly internationalist frameworks—see, indicatively, Priya Satia, 'Developing Iraq: Britain, India and the Redemption of Empire and Technology in the First World War', *Past & Present*, 197 (2007), 211–55.

[127] Pitts, *Boundaries*, esp. 134–8.

[128] Woolf, *Economic Imperialism*, 108–9. China joined the League in 1920 as a founding member and a sovereign power. Under the Nationalist government of Chiang Kai-shek it did welcome some League economic and developmental assistance from 1931. See Margherita Zanasi, 'Exporting Development: The League of Nations and Republican China', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 49 (2007), 143–69.

[129] Erik J. Zürcher, *Turkey: A Modern History* [1993] (London, 2017), 143–4; Yiğit Akın, 'The Ottoman Empire: The Mandate That Never Was', *The American Historical Review*, 124 (2019), 1694–8; Laderman, *Sharing the Burden*, 161–6.

would suggest, he had little interest in securing Turkish sovereignty. His was one of the strongest voices calling for the permanent internationalization of Istanbul during the war, going as far as to draw up a comprehensive plan for what this might look like, published in 1917 under the title *The Future of Constantinople.* This was another text in a 'gas and water internationalism' mode. Woolf key concern was to demonstrate that though 'international administration' had failed in Egypt (declared a British protectorate in 1914), there were other success stories.[130] International administration over the Straits and Istanbul might function not as a radically new system but as a replica of the successes of the Danube Commission—a product of the 1856 Treaty of Paris—albeit with a significantly expanded municipal framework to govern the populous city of Istanbul.[131] Even that latter innovation Woolf sought to downplay—cities in the Crown Colonies of the British Empire, such as Colombo in Sri Lanka, might serve as fitting models of supreme executive and legislative councils that could govern such a territory, perhaps eventually including some 'native' members.[132]

This little-known text is telling as much for what it does not say as what it does. In discussing the possibility of 'native' representation on executive and legislative councils, Woolf noted that 'such a form of government is, of course, a transitional stage between representative and non-representative local government' and yet he did not proceed any further than that.[133] He did not note that whereas British rule in the Crown Colonies, in common with the League's mandates system, rested rhetorically at least on the telos of future self-government,[134] what he imagined in the case of Istanbul was a permanent settlement through which an extensive juridical authority possessing vast policing powers would arrogate to itself powers over a territory in perpetuity. This discussion was absent of any consideration of whether Istanbul, a dynamic metropolis that had been at the heart of a seismic constitutional revolution less than a decade earlier, gained any political liberty through such an arrangement.[135] Indeed, by denying the city any 'national' character early on in the text—he certainly did not think it had any claim to being Turkish—he was able to altogether dismiss questions surrounding nationality and political rights.[136] The broader historical narrative that had been advanced in *International Government* suggested an inexorable development towards such a mode of government; in *The Future of*

[130] Leonard Woolf, *The Future of Constantinople* (London, 1917), 28–35.
[131] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 36–80.
[132] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 74–9.
[133] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 76.
[134] Not all mandatory powers accepted that 'self-government' entailed eventual political independence, particularly in the case of the former German colonies in Africa and the Pacific—see Anghie, *Imperialism*, 121.
[135] On the second constitutional period (1908–1918), see Zürcher, *Turkey*, 91–132.
[136] Woolf addresses Constantinople's non-national character in *Future of Constantinople*, 19 and 85.

Constantinople, the city was at a historical juncture as both the site of 'a narrow nationalism and rigid imperialism' and, potentially, 'a new kind of internationalism'.[137] Where *International Government* had bemoaned those lawyers who insisted on the importance of sovereignty, *The Future of Constantinople* praised those statesmen and diplomatists who had given rise to a 'practical' system of international relations without having troubled with the concept at all.[138]

The question of where sovereignty lay in the mandates system was left unresolved and ambiguous—deliberately so, Pedersen has argued—in its early years.[139] While the League eventually established in the late 1920s, in response to a series of crises and the growing demands of mandatory peoples themselves, the norm that sovereignty did not lie with the mandatory powers, it could not reach a conclusion about where it *did* lie—sovereignty did not rest with the populations that were supposed to inherit it some day since they could not exercise it, though some interwar jurists argued it rested latently within the territory, in a state of 'abeyance' but able to be 'revived' if and when independence was achieved.[140] In Pedersen's words, 'what the mandates system did was less to deprive the mandatory powers of sovereignty than to create spaces from which sovereignty was banished altogether'.[141] While the general discussion of sovereignty in *International Government* indicates that this was a development Woolf would have welcomed, his invocation of the Crown Colonies in *The Future of Constantinople* also suggests that he did not at this early date imagine that mandatory rule would prove a significant departure from British imperial precedent, which already included a multiplicity of ways of exercising sovereignty according to legal and political expediency.[142]

Woolf was ultimately most concerned that his plan for Istanbul might be mistaken for something 'utopian'.[143] For Woolf, the mandate was not only necessary and practical, but it was also the 'test case' of the Allies' ability to proceed on principles of law and order more broadly.[144] This is not to say that Woolf's reasoning was purely 'scientific'. Where *International Government* had treated the Ottoman Empire as a problem to be solved, Woolf demonstrated a barely veiled antipathy towards it in *The Future of Constantinople*. The Ottomans were an 'alien state'[145] and

[137] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 15.
[138] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 16–7.
[139] Pedersen, *Guardians*, ch. 7.
[140] Anghie, *Imperialism*, 147, quoting Arnold McNair, a judge of the International Court of Justice, in a legal opinion of 1950.
[141] Pedersen, *Guardians*, 232.
[142] For a critique of Pedersen's account of the novelty of the League's norms concerning mandatory sovereignty, see Priya Satia, 'Guarding *The Guardians*: Payoffs and perils', *Humanity*, 7 (2016), 481–98.
[143] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, esp. 28–30, 79–80, 82–83, 87, and 96–7.
[144] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 97 and 107.
[145] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 13 and 18.

thus there could be no objection to removing 'the Turk' from Istanbul.[146] The city was 'nothing but a port of passage',[147] with no 'intrinsic value'[148]; far from being the key to ruling the world, as the apocryphal saying went, it was not even the key to Asia or Egypt.[149] Nevertheless, Istanbul 'radiated' conflict: 'It is not improbable that when Europe in her last ditch has fought the last battle of the Great War, we shall find that what we have again been fighting about is really Constantinople.'[150]

As public and political opinion coalesced around the idea of drawing the boundaries of Europe at the Straits, and pushing Turkey beyond it, Woolf's idea of a wholly neutralized, internationalized Istanbul under the control of an international organ simultaneously gained more traction while becoming less practically feasible. Woolf's detailed scheme echoed throughout Allied negotiations; when, for instance, the King-Crane Commission of 1919—a US-led inquiry into the territorial settlement of Ottoman Empire—recommended in its final report the creation of an 'international Constantinopolitan State', it quoted Woolf's *The Future of Constantinople* for support.[151] And yet, it was already clear that the League had neither the resources nor the mettle to undertake the administration of such a state.[152] The USA, the only power that Woolf thought could convincingly defend the neutrality of the Straits in times of war if the League did not have armed forces of its own, spent two years considering the matter to no avail.[153] Despite Wilson's own tentative support for an American mandate in Istanbul in conjunction with one for Armenia on strictly 'humanitarian' grounds, domestic political opinion would not countenance the USA joining the League of Nations at all let alone taking on responsibility for what Woolf had described as the 'breeding-ground of hatred and covetousness and war'.[154]

IV

Woolf is a particularly useful lens through which to see how socialists could come to provide not only intellectual and political sanction but fervent support to the partitioning and internationalizing of territory after the

[146] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 25–6.
[147] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 22.
[148] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 21–2 and 27.
[149] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 88–9.
[150] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 11–12.
[151] Inter-allied Commission on Mandates in Turkey, *King-Crane Report on the Near East* (New York, 1922), xvi.
[152] The League did undertake to 'internationalise' and directly administer three regions within Europe—Danzig, the Saar, and Upper Silesia—hough both rhetorically and procedurally, these were treated as separate to those territories in the mandates system. On the legal novelties of these states, see Berman, 'European Nationalism', 1874–98.
[153] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 93–8.
[154] Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 12. See also Laderman *Sharing the Burden*, 167.

First World War. It is worth, however, thinking further about areas of debate, uncertainty, and critique. During the closing stages of the war and in its immediate aftermath, Fabian and Labour Party treatises and manifestos alike produced the appearance of ideological certitude but for the latter, at least, each new international and imperial question had the potential to generate enormous degrees of controversy. This was a party whose leading figures included trade unionists, erstwhile Liberals, pacificists, guild socialists, Christian socialists, as well as of course Fabians, and which was in these crucial years attempting to devise a foreign policy fit to appeal to a post-war electorate. The Russian Revolution and the emergence of the Communist International in 1920 also placed palpable pressure on it to define what the socialism of the Second International stood for as an alternative.[155] This final section considers debates within the Labour Party's Advisory Committee on International Questions, of which Woolf was secretary and Sidney Webb chairman, regarding the future of Istanbul. While socialist declarations during the war had been unanimous about the need to rid Europe of 'Turkish hordes', the question clearly remained open for discussion amongst this group of experts and intellectuals.

The ACIntQ's debates on the future of Istanbul bring to light aspects of the Turkish question that remain obscure even in Woolf's rather extensive writings on the subject. Woolf showed little interest in Britain's long and deep history of cultural and intellectual engagement with the Ottoman world, or in the fact that Istanbul was the seat of the Ottoman Caliphate and, consequently, the locus of a great deal of political and religious interest amongst Muslims across the world.[156] In Sri Lanka, Woolf had governed over a minority population of Muslims (variously referred to as 'Moors' or 'Arabs') who were seemingly somewhat removed from a burgeoning worldwide pan-Islamic discourse that centred on the Caliphate.[157] Others in the Labour ranks with close interest in the Middle East and India were more conscious that as the Caliphate's significance appeared to grow among Muslims globally, Britain's own relationship to the 'Muslim world' became more complex.[158] Indian Muslims, in particular, had mobilized a concerted campaign after the war to forestall what they saw as Europe's imminent dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire

[155] On the tensions produced by these events, see Vickers, *Labour Party and the World*, vol. 1, 64–9.

[156] 'Constantinople derives its importance from two and only two distinct causes, its strategical position and its political-economic position'—Woolf, *Future of Constantinople*, 20. On prior engagements, see most recently Jonathan Parry, *Promised Lands: The British and the Ottoman Middle East* (Princeton, NJ, 2022).

[157] On pan-Islamism, see Jacob M. Landau, *Pan-Islam: History and Politics* [1990] (Oxford, 2015).

[158] On the concept of 'the Muslim world', emergent in European discourses about Islam from the nineteenth century, see Cemil Aydin, 'Globalizing the intellectual history of the idea of the "Muslim World"', in Andrew Sartori and Samuel Moyn (eds), *Global Intellectual History* (New York, 2013) and *The Idea of the Muslim World* (Cambridge, MA, 2017).

and, with it, the temporal foundations of the Caliphate.[159] The Indian Khilafat Movement (1919–1924) sent frequent communications on the subject to the Labour Party in these years. In late 1919, a set of resolutions produced by Khilafat meetings in India was forwarded to Arthur Henderson, at which point the ACIntQ set out to develop a coherent response to this most pressing of problems.

The ACIntQ had decided early on in its existence to divide responsibility for parts of the world to regional specialists. Arnold J. Toynbee was designated its expert on what was still then referred to as the 'Near East'.[160] Toynbee had been a classicist at Oxford but left in 1914 to take up the study of international relations. He worked as an intelligence analyst in the Foreign Office during the war and between 1918 and 1919, was part of the British delegation to the Peace Conference, returning to an academic post—a chair in Modern Greek and Byzantine Studies at Kings' College London—in 1919. Toynbee had had Fabian sympathies while at Oxford and after the war he moved closer towards the Labour Party.[161] Studies that position Toynbee as an arch internationalist and wartime International Relations pioneer generally overlook Toynbee's close interest in 'the problem of Turkey' during and after the war and how this part of the world shaped his early internationalism.[162] Toynbee was a consistent critic of the Turkish Government in this period, having helped produce a report with Viscount Bryce into the massacre of Armenians during the war.[163] After the war, his writings conveyed deep frustration that the Allies were not doing more to reduce Turkish power and called for the ejection of 'the Turk' from Istanbul as punishment for his misrule.[164]

A first draft of an ACIntQ memorandum on Turkey, drawn up by Toynbee, was presented in November 1919.[165] It summarized Indian demands under two headings: that the British Government ought not to

[159] On the Khilafat Movement more broadly, see Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York, 1982); M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement, 1918-1924* (Leiden, 1999).

[160] Minutes of the first meeting of the LPACIntQ, 30 May 1918, LP/IAC/1/3, Labour Party Archive (Manchester).

[161] Giannakopoulos, 'A world safe for empires?', 499, n. 76.

[162] See, for instance, Stöckmann, *Architects*, ch. 1. By contrast, Priya Satia situates Toynbee within the conspiratorial culture of post-war British thought on the Middle East—see *Spies in Arabia: The Great War and the Cultural Foundations of Britain's Covert Empire in the Middle East* (Oxford, 2008). Giannakopoulos has recently demonstrated that the Turkish question is a useful lens to understand Toynbee's evolving understanding of nationalism and self-determination—see 'A world safe for empires?'

[163] Arnold J. Toynbee, James Bryce, *Armenian Atrocities: The Murder of a Nation* (London, 1915).

[164] Toynbee wrote extensively about the Turkish Peace Settlement at this time for journals such *The New Europe* (London). On the subject of the Class 'A' mandates, see especially Arnold J. Toynbee, *The League in the East* (London, 1920).

[165] A timeline of revisions can be reconstructed from the minutes of LPACIntQ meetings on 27 October 1919, LP/IAC/1/76; 10 November, 1919, LP/IAC/1/78; 24 November 1919, LP/IAC/1/81; and 3 January 1920, LP/IAC/1/86.

take any action which would interfere with the institution of the Caliphate, and that the British Government ought not to discriminate against Muslims in the territorial settlement. While 'these underlying propositions will not be contested by any responsible party in Great Britain', in application this would mean 'we ought not to diminish the Sultan of Turkey's sovereignty or to detach (at any rate completely) any of the proper territory of the Ottoman Empire—not even Armenia or the shores of the Black Sea Straits'. The 'Labour Party cannot associate itself with this extreme interpretation', wrote Toynbee.[166] There followed a history of the caliphate and the schism between Sunnis and Shi'as that reflected a familiar—and strategically useful—British argument: that the Sultan of Turkey's claim to the caliphate was a deeply contested one, that the Hashemite potentate Sharif Hussein's claim was a better one, and that to take any action to support the Sultan of Turkey would be to intervene in a religious matter—just as the memorialists had asked them not to. Indian concern about the caliphate was understood to be, at heart, a concern about waning Muslim power in the world. 'This is a very reasonable feeling, of which we ought to take account,' Toynbee continued. In responding to memorialists, the Labour Party should, however, refer to two points in its already established policy; first, that 'the Party stands for giving self-government to India and to Egypt as quickly and completely as possible', and secondly, that 'it stands for a reconstruction of any provinces detached from Turkey [...] by a genuine application of a principle of "mandates"'.[167]

The draft elaborated on several specific territorial questions regarding the settlement of Thrace, Smyrna, Istanbul, the Straits, Armenia, and the Arabic-speaking populations. It referred to various agreements between the British Government, the French, Zionists, and Arab nationalists, 'agreements which though not technically incompatible, were embarrassing' for the British Government (indeed, socialist publications in Britain had played a notable role in exposing the Government's 'secret diplomacy' during the war as part of a wider movement for more democratic control over foreign policy). The Labour Party, for its part, needed to be above reproach on such matters, adhering rigidly to the 'scrupulous application of our general international principles to Moslem as well as Western countries; and a determination that mandates shall be strictly drawn and properly observed'.[168] Labour ought to be particularly suspicious of any appeal to the idea that the British Empire was the world's 'greatest Muslim power', a common refrain since the nineteenth century that went hand-in-hand and without contradiction with British fears

[166] LPACIntQ memorandum, November 1919, LP/IAC/2/103.
[167] LPACIntQ memorandum, November 1919, LP/IAC/2/103.
[168] LPACIntQ memorandum, November 1919, LP/IAC/2/103.

surrounding the subversive potentially of pan-Islamism.[169] Toynbee thought the appeal rang particularly hollow given the role that Britain had played in supporting the Hashemite-led Arab Revolt against Turkey during the war. 'The moral for the Labour Party' was, ultimately, 'to avoid burning its fingers with the caliphate question in any form'.[170]

It is some indication of the ambitions of the ACIntQ to reach well-considered policy positions that the draft memorandum was sent for feedback to E. G. Browne, Professor of Arabic at the University of Cambridge. Browne, a long-standing critic of European policy in the East, was sympathetic to the claim that what was really at stake was the continued existence of a truly independent Muslim power, and he agreed that it was absurd to speak of Britain itself as a Muslim power, but he decidedly disagreed with the draft's optimistic presentation of mandates. 'I do not believe that the Labour Party or anybody else can possibly confine these "mandates" to "Temporary Trusteeships"', wrote Browne, with a great degree of prescience.[171] 'I cannot regard the term "mandate" as anything else than a new gilding for the same poisonous old pill which has done so much to bring about the recent War'. Moreover, he 'regard[ed] the retention of Constantinople (or, at least, Stamboul) by the Turks as essential'.[172] Istanbul had a claim to culture, civilization, and learning; 'It is those who seek to destroy Turkey who demand that Constantinople should cease to be the Turkish capital.'[173]

As the ACIntQ received Browne's comments, further representations were sent from India. In January 1920, for instance, Henderson received a cable from the headquarters of the Central Khilafat Committee in Bombay that insisted that the 'principle of nationality conceded to other belligerents … be strictly observed with Turkey also allowing Constantinople, Adrianople and Smyrna to remain in her possession'.[174] When a delegation of Khilafat representatives arrived in Europe to make their case in person, their publications also began appearing among the ACIntQ's papers. Further revisions were made to the draft memorandum—at least three—until in February 1920 a final copy was issued; a cover letter stated that 'the enclosed memorandum [had] been passed by the Executive Committee and [was] ordered to be forwarded to the

[169] For an exploration of this duality, see Faisal Devji, 'Islam and British Imperial Thought', in David Motadel (ed.), *Islam and the European Empires* (Oxford, 2014). See also John Slight, *The British Empire and the Hajj, 1865-1956* (Cambridge, MA, 2015).
[170] LPACIntQ memorandum, November 1919, LP/IAC/2/103.
[171] LPACIntQ memorandum, 18 November 1919, LP/IAC/2/108.
[172] LPACIntQ memorandum, November 1919, LP/IAC/2/103. 'Stamboul' referred to the old part of the city.
[173] LPACIntQ memorandum, November 1919, LP/IAC/2/103.
[174] LPACIntQ memorandum (cable received by Arthur Henderson), 6 January 1920, LP/IAC/2/121.

British and Indian Press'.[175] The final version largely followed the lines of original but, notably, declared that Istanbul should remain with Turkey.[176]

This long-awaited statement on the Turkish question arguably amounted to Labour's first articulation of its position on the 'Muslim world' at large. Acknowledging that the full application of self-determination to Turkish territories would lead to the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, and that all Muslims were concerned that this would weaken the political position of Islam in the world, the memorandum professed that the Labour Party was sympathetic and 'utterly opposed to any advantage being taken of the Turkish settlement in order to extend the hold of European imperialism over non-European peoples'. At the same time, the Labour Party 'doubt whether the Ottoman Empire has performed or could perform the function expected of her by non-Ottoman Moslems' and 'suggest that the destiny of Turkey is of less importance to Islam than the destinies of the much larger Moslem populations that have come under some form or other of European dominion'.[177] When self-government was established in Egypt, Mesopotamia, and India—all places, notably, under various forms of British control at this time—Islam would become a far stronger force in the world than the Ottoman Empire could ever have rendered her.[178]

While this was no admission of the Indian demand that the independence of the Ottoman Caliphate should be preserved in the peace settlement, the statement did acknowledge that self-determination would not in itself settle all the claims circulating in this period. An unsigned note attached to this letter, marked strictly for internal circulation only, elaborated upon this theme. The Muslim belief that Turkey was a world power was 'almost entirely a delusion'—in fact, 'she has not been a great power for the last century and a half; she has only preserved her existence by taking advantage of the jealousies of the Christian powers and prostituting herself to one Christian power after another [. . .]'[179] This was where the Labour Party ought to come in. In the epoch to come, while the West would be occupied by the 'social problem', its 'old problems of national liberty and political self-government' were going to 'shift to the Middle East'. It 'would be a great opportunity missed if Labour, pre-occupied by its struggles at home, neglected to concern itself with the no less

[175] LPACIntQ memorandum (enclosing 108b, 108c, 108d), 17 February 1920, LP/IAC/2/108.
[176] LPACIntQ memorandum (enclosing 108b, 108c, 108d), 17 February 1920, LP/IAC/2/108.
[177] LPACIntQ memorandum (enclosing 108b, 108c, 108d), 17 February 1920, LP/IAC/2/108.
[178] LPACIntQ memorandum (enclosing 108b, 108c, 108d), 17 February 1920, LP/IAC/2/108.
[179] LPACIntQ memorandum, February 1920, LP/IAC/2/109.

momentous struggles that will be taking place in the Oriental dominions of the British Empire'. While 'the political horizon [was] very dark' in all these dominions, if Labour followed 'the right policy' and did its duty by these countries, it could 'do more to restore the position of Islamic civilization than could ever have been done by the Turks'. The Labour Party had a 'great opportunity here for developing a policy of its own'.[180] While it is possible this striking note was penned by Toynbee, the sentiments expressed can also be found in the contemporary writings of other ACIntQ stalwarts; for instance, Henry N. Brailsford, a prominent socialist figure in UDC and ILP circles, wrote in the same year of his vision of a future Labour Government restoring 'the glories of the caliphs' and the civilisational triumphs of Baghdad through a programme of constructive, useful work with the profits of Mosul's oil.[181] A council might be appointed to oversee this process, but Britain should be otherwise left 'unmolested to do a great work for [Mesopotamians], for Islam, and for the whole of civilisation'. Labour needed such bold plans, argued Brailsford; it could not simply hope that the British Empire would transform itself into a kind of socialist state otherwise.[182] While the authorship of the internal note is uncertain, its very existence is indicative of the fact that the ACIntQ's membership more broadly was able to entertain romantic visions of a Labour-led Britain leading Islamic civilization out of darkness—a vision, in effect, of the British Empire as once more the world's 'greatest Muslim power'.[183]

It is difficult to reconcile the fact that many prominent ACIntQ members favoured removing Istanbul from Turkish control and yet the body explicitly declared against this. The ACIntQ's minutes largely obscure lines of internal dissent. We do not know what Leonard Woolf himself made of these discussions, though apart from one meeting in December 1919 he was present on every occasion that the memorandum was discussed. We might attribute the sea change in opinion to the singular influence of Browne and his profound scepticism of mandates, or to the wider pressure of the Khilafat Movement, which had mobilized widespread support in India in tandem with M. K. Gandhi's first non-cooperation movement, or perhaps even to fears of a Bolshevik-backed revolution across the Muslim world in the event that the Caliphate should fall. We might see it as a reflection of the diffuse Orientalism of figures such as Brailsford, or as an augury of Toynbee's own reappraisal of Turkish

[180] LPACIntQ memorandum, February 1920, LP/IAC/2/109.
[181] H. N. Brailsford, *After the Peace* (London, 1920), 168–9.
[182] Brailsford, *After the Peace*, 182–4.
[183] It is worth noting that this romantic vision of restoring 'Islamic civilisation' was in considerable contrast to Labour's opinion on the question of Palestine in the same period. Throughout the interwar period Labour was supportive of the Jewish claim to a national home in Palestine while dismissive of the Arab Muslim capacity for self-determination.

nationalism in the years that immediately followed, although in February 1920 he was still unquestionably opposed to 'leaving the Turk at Constantinople', interpreting the decision to do so as proof that Britain valued its Indian dependency more than the interests of all Europeans.[184] Or we might regard it as simply testament to the multiple, contesting intellectual traditions that constituted Labour thought in this period. Present at the various meetings at which the Khilafat response was discussed was every species of left-internationalist thought, from Woolf and the Webbs, through to G. D. H. and Margaret Cole, G. Lowes-Dickinson, ILP-Chairman Philip Snowden, and Communist Party of Great Britain founder, R. P. Dutt. Ramsay MacDonald and Susan Lawrence, a Labour councillor in Poplar, were recorded as having submitted revisions to the memorandum.[185]

Members of the advisory body were clearly free to express their opinions on the unfolding Turkish settlement in leading left journals, too. Notably, MacDonald, writing in April 1920 in *Foreign Affairs*, the journal of the UDC, was resolute that removing Istanbul from Turkish control was simply Christendom punishing Islam, when in fact Istanbul as the seat of the caliphate and a capital in which Muslims might take pride had 'a useful future before it' in securing world peace.[186] Brailsford thought Istanbul would make a fitting capital for the League itself since it was in his opinion already the most international city in the world.[187] The Indian Khilafat delegation that came to Britain in 1920 met with UDC leaders including MacDonald and E. D. Morel, and as a result *Foreign Affairs* devoted a special supplement to the Khilafat cause in July 1920.[188] Pacifists were particularly exercised by this topic, seeing the question of Istanbul and the future of the caliphate as part of the broader problem of Britain's increasing entanglement in the Middle East. The popular ILP-newspaper, the *Daily Herald*, published dozens of articles in 1920 sympathetic to the Khilafat cause and its editor, George Lansbury, hosted and helped publicize large public meetings for the Khilafat delegation filled with Labour supporters, meetings at which the importance of the Ottoman Empire and Caliphate retaining temporal power were continually reaffirmed.[189] The delegation, having made little headway with

[184] Giannakopoulos, 'A world safe for empires?', 493–96; Arnold J. Toynbee, 'The Meaning of the Constantinople Decision', *The New Europe*, 19 February 1920, 129–31.
[185] LPACIntQ minutes, 3 January 1920, LP/IAC/1/86.
[186] J. Ramsay MacDonald, 'Turkey and Constantinople', *Foreign Affairs* (London), April 1920, 7.
[187] H. N. Brailsford, *A League of Nations* (London, 1917), 309; H. N. Brailsford, 'The Fate of Constantinople', *Daily Herald* (London), 1 January 1920, 4.
[188] Special Supplement: India and the Empire, *Foreign Affairs*, July 1920. See also Mohamed Ali to Shaukat Ali, 3 June 1920, in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *Mohamed Ali in Indian Politics: Select Writings*, 3 vols (Delhi, 1982), vol. 2, 93–7.
[189] See, for example, *Daily Herald*, 23 April 1920, 5; *Justice to Islam and Turkey*, Khilafat Delegation Publications no. 6 (London, 1920).

Liberals, worked hard to enlighten the 'fearfully ignorant' Labour Party (they were rather more impressed with socialists in France and Italy).[190] Such was their popular appeal that the leader of the delegation, Mohamed Ali, was even able to address the Labour Party annual conference at Scarborough that summer,[191] an encounter indicative of the urgency that colonized subjects themselves brought to discussions of empire in the metropole.[192] Those in the wider left that were sympathetic to the Khilafat cause were relatively marginal voices as far as Labour Party policymaking was concerned, but serve as a reminder that the Fabian approach to imperial and international questions, while enjoying significant influence after the war, did not represent socialist thought as a whole.

Indeed, while the Labour Party Executive adopted the ACIntQ's newly agreed position on Istanbul early in 1920, the parliamentary party appears not to have noted the shift before events at the Peace Conference made it largely redundant only days later.[193] Having assumed the USA would take the mandate for Istanbul, when it was finally confirmed that it would not, the remaining Allied powers were left unable to imagine a cooperative regime between them.[194] Ultimately the financial burden that such a mandate would pose, and the scale of military force that would be required to secure it, became the most persuasive arguments against establishing a mandate at all. When the Government announced in the House of Commons on 18 February 1920 that the Peace Conference had decided not to remove Turkish rule from Istanbul—and thus not 'expel the Turk from Europe'—it sparked considerable outcry across the

[190] Mohamed Ali to Shaukat Ali, 16 July 1920, in Hasan (ed.), *Mohamed Ali*, vol. 2, 139–43.

[191] *Report of the Twentieth Annual Conference of the Labour Party* (London, 1920), 144–5.

[192] Indians were particularly effective in building anticolonial networks in Britain, though Indian Muslims specifically were not prominent organisers in London after 1920, as Owens notes in *British Left and India*, 19–20. Part of the reason for this may have been the unsatisfactory outcome of the 1920 delegation. Mohamed Ali reflected on the weaknesses of the Labour Party upon his return to India—see 'Speech as the Aligarh Muslim University Library', 12 October 1920, in Hasan (ed.), *Mohamed Ali*, vol. 2, 174–81. After more radical organisations such as the League Against Imperialism emerged, even erstwhile supporters such as George Lansbury came in for sharp rebuke from Mohamed Ali—see 'Report of meeting at Limehouse Town Hall of League against Imperialism', 19 October 1928, LP/ID/CI/36/13-14.

[193] The divergence between the Labour Executive and the party's MPs inside the House of Commons is noted by Colonel Wedgewood—see Commons sitting of 26 February 1920, *Hansard*, series 5, vol. 125, cc. 1949–2060, at cc. 2021–22.

[194] With further killings and expulsions of Armenians by Nationalist forces reported to be currently occurring in Turkey, Lloyd George's Government was facing pressure in the Commons to confirm whether the Peace Conference would indeed decide to remove the Turkish Government from Istanbul. While the Conference had effectively already decided not to do so, the British Government hoped to use the threat of removal as leverage to pressure the Turkish Government to put an end to the violence. See Commons sitting of 18 February 1920, *Hansard*, series 5, vol. 125, cc. 867–70.

spectrum of British political opinion.[195] Lloyd George was forced to step away from the Conference, then meeting in London, to address critics in the Commons, among whom were prominent League advocates and Middle East experts such as Lord Cecil. William Adamson, leader of the Labour Party in parliament, reiterated what was officially no longer his party's declared position: that Istanbul ought to be removed from Turkish control and handed over to the League.[196]

These criticisms did not change the course of the Peace Conference. The terms of the Turkish peace treaty were confirmed in San Remo in April and signed in Sèvres in August 1920 by Ottoman representatives. The treaty imposed enormous territorial losses on the Ottoman Empire and placed the Bosporus and Dardanelles under an international commission (of which Turkey was not eligible to be a member until it joined the League). Istanbul was divided into European 'spheres of influence'.[197] This established indefinite European control over the city without the apparatus—and obligations—of a formal mandatory regime. This settlement would remain an object of scathing critique in Labour foreign policy in the years that followed,[198] though the Treaty of Sèvres ultimately proved short-lived. In 1923, Turkish Nationalists under Mustafa Kemal, having regained territory militarily, forced a revision of its terms with the Treaty of Lausanne, which formally recognized Turkish sovereignty over both Istanbul and the Straits and the new Republic's legal equality.[199] Soon afterwards, the Nationalists themselves abolished the institution of the Caliphate and declared their capital in Ankara in central Anatolia, indicating their belief that a well-defined, secular nationality was necessary to guard Turkey's newly recognised sovereign status.

Conclusion

The story of early socialist imperialism has to date largely focused on Bernard Shaw's manifesto of 1900, *Fabianism and the Empire*. It has rarely been taken beyond the Boer War era and there has thus been little account of how it evolved during a period of intense internationalist thinking during the First World War. With a few exceptions, the story of Fabianism and imperialism tends only to resume with the establishment in 1940 of

[195] The scale of misgivings is clear from the list of prominent signatories to a memorial addressed to the Prime Minister that appeared in the *Times* days later—see 'The Turk in Europe', the *Times* (London), 23 February 1920, 16.

[196] Commons sitting of 26 February 1920, *Hansard*, series 5, vol. 125, cc. 2016–19.

[197] 'Treaty between the Allied and Associated Powers and Turkey', signed at Sèvres, 10 August 1920, in *The Treaties of Peace, 1919-1923*, 2 vols (New York, 1924), vol. 2, 789–941.

[198] See Arthur Henderson, *Labour and Foreign Affairs* (London, 1923), 5–6.

[199] See 'Treaty of Peace with Turkey', signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1923, and 'The Convention Respecting the Régime of the Straits', signed at Lausanne, 24 July 1923, both in *Treaties of Peace*, vol. 2, 959–1022 and 1023–35, respectively. See also Cemil Aydin et al., 'Rethinking Nationalism', *The American Historical Review*, 127 (2022), 311–71, at 341–6.

the influential Fabian Colonial Bureau and the onset of a high age of colonial developmentalism after the Second World War. A contextualized reading of Fabian texts in the 1910s, however, suggests that the period of the First World War was an important one, when arguments in favour of internationalizing territories were sharpened along mutually supporting legal and economic lines. In *International Government*, Leonard Woolf simultaneously articulated a general distrust of the 'abstraction' of sovereignty while offering a historicist account of the emergence of a nascent pre-war internationalism conditioned precisely by asymmetries in sovereignty between Europeans and non-Europeans. Even as Fabians set themselves apart as more systematic and less 'muddled' thinkers than Liberals, they exemplified the illiberalism common to liberal imperial and internationalist thought alike. This article has also demonstrated the need to situate developments in political thought within culturally specific histories.[200] The Ottoman Empire certainly stimulated the internationalist imagination in dramatic ways, including striking plans for a permanent mandate over Istanbul. An exploration of the Labour Party's deliberations on the future of the Ottoman Empire and Caliphate has indicated, nevertheless, that Fabian internationalist ambitions were tempered, rather ironically, by other socialist voices who drew upon an older understanding of Britain's imperial relationship with the Muslim world at large.

[200] Satia, 'Guarding *The Guardians*'.