



Section I: **Individual Articles**

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“Abhorrent to English Ears”: Anti-Intellectualism and the League of Nations in Interwar Britain

Abstract: As noted by Gilbert Murray in 1931, the League Committee of Intellectual Cooperation (CIC) faced skepticism in Great Britain, thus highlighting a prevalent mistrust of abstract ideas among English audiences. This article explores Britain’s engagement with intellectual cooperation, arguing that it reflected broader tensions regarding the role of intellectuals in British society and a resistance to transnational cultural cooperation. Two main points are discussed: (1) the negative perception of intellectuals in interwar Britain and the prevailing anti-intellectual discourse; and (2) the British reluctance to fully embrace projects such as the CIC, evidenced by the tepid reception of the British National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation. This reluctance provided some opportunities for Wales to align itself more favorably with the League’s cultural initiatives. Debates concerning intellectuals were crucial in the discussions leading up to the establishment of UNESCO during the Second World War.

Keywords: intellectuals, anti-intellectualism, interwar, League of Nations, Britain

Introduction

“The League Committee of Intellectual Cooperation, or CIC, has never attracted much sympathy in Great Britain. The name has about it something priggish, something that sounds to our prejudiced ears ‘Latin and not Anglo-Saxon.’ It rouses, until it can explain itself, all the Englishman’s instinctive mistrust of abstract ideas.” These were the words of Gilbert Murray, chair of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (CIC), writing to *The Times* in 1931. Murray’s remark is an important starting point in seeking to understand Britain’s relationship with the intellectual work of the League of Nations and its associated bodies, namely the CIC and the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC). This is important because it reveals a great deal regarding attitudes toward intellectuals in the interwar period while also providing important insights into the contours of British anti-intellectualism.

Britain’s relationship with the idea of “intellectual cooperation” was defined by a pronounced public cynicism throughout the 1920s and 1930s. There were two

major reasons for this. First, the discourse surrounding the idea of “intellectual cooperation” in Britain revealed a wider tension regarding the role of the intellectual in British society and the characteristics of intellectuals more generally. The term “intellectual” was often deployed in a negative and pejorative sense where anti-intellectualism was prominent in public discourse and “denialism” was part of the English national identity.¹ Contemporary discourse often emphasized the “foreignness” of the idea of “intellectual cooperation” and frequently asserted that to be an “intellectual” was not a British quality but one that came from elsewhere. Second, Britain’s relationship with intellectual cooperation was illustrative of a wider disinclination in British political and cultural life to “buy into” a project that presupposed a degree of transnational cultural coherence, especially when this encroached on longstanding imperial connections. At a more practical level, administrators in cultural organizations were often resistant to fully engage with projects initiated by the Geneva-based CIC as these were perceived as threatening similar projects that had already been initiated within the setting of the British Empire.

This article explores anti-intellectualism in British public life through an analysis of British attitudes to and relationships with the CIC. It shows that the Geneva-based organization was emblematic of wider anti-intellectual attitudes in British interwar society precisely due to its “foreignness.” Britain’s interactions with intellectual cooperation are measured in three ways: with an analysis of British attitudes toward the idea of “the intellectual,” through public discussions of the concept of “intellectual cooperation” and via a brief exploration of the activities of the British National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (BNCIC). The article concludes during the Second World War when Anglo-American planning discussions for what would become UNESCO self-consciously reflected upon interwar anti-intellectualism in order to ensure greater longevity for the successor organization to the League of Nations.

This article juxtaposes Britain’s relationship with the League of Nations and its own anxiety regarding intellectuals as both issues were based on similar ideas. The League of Nations was the world’s first intergovernmental organization. First and foremost, it brought countries together to pursue methods such as international arbitration to avoid war but also for a swathe of ancillary purposes, from the prevention of drug trafficking to the standardization of labor legislation. The League, with varying degrees of success, sought to normalize and institutionalize

¹ Stefan Collini, *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 69; David Edgerton, *The Rise and Fall of the British Nation: A Twentieth-Century History* (London: Penguin, 2018), 153.

international cooperation in many spheres, including intellectual cooperation. While the League progressed tentatively and incrementally in many areas, this was often seen as having the potential to encroach upon national sovereignty, which meant that the League’s growing influence was sometimes perceived as being at odds with national or imperial policy.² Similarly, Britain’s relationship with its intellectuals was also based on a sense of international connectedness as the idea of “the intellectual” was commonly seen as a foreign import that did not align with British qualities. In this way, the issue of Britain’s relationship with intellectual cooperation rested upon competing visions of internationalism, both in how it was imagined and how it was informed.³ This article demonstrates that interwar anti-intellectualism could take a number of forms, which, in turn, mirrored the different meanings of the term intellectual in the same period.

Intellectuals in Britain

There is a broad literature on intellectuals and anti-intellectualism in modern Britain.⁴ It is generally accepted that anti-intellectualism and the idea that Britain had no intellectuals was part of the British or, more specifically, English national

² One area in which sovereignty was often invoked was in the League’s desire to influence teaching at school. Kaiyi Li, *Transnational Education between the League of Nations and China* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021), 56.

³ On internationalism, see Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, eds., *Internationalisms: A Twentieth-Century History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Daniel Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017); Daniel Laqua, ed., *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements between the World Wars* (London: Bloomsbury, 2011); Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

⁴ Collini, *Absent Minds*; John Carey, *The Intellectuals and the Masses: Pride and Prejudice among the Literary Intelligentsia, 1880–1939* (London: Faber, 1992); Noel Annan, *The Dons: Mentors, Eccentrics and Geniuses* (London: Harper Collins, 1999); Frank M. Turner, *Contesting Cultural Authority: Essays in Victorian Intellectual Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); William C. Lubenow, *Learned Lives in England, 1900–1950: Institutions, Ideas and Intellectual Experience* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2020); John Rodden, “On the Political Sociology of Intellectuals: George Orwell and the London Left intelligentsia of the 1930s,” *The Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers canadiens de sociologie* 15, no. 3 (1990): 251–273; T. W. Heyck, “Myths and Meanings of Intellectuals in Twentieth-Century British National Identity,” *Journal of British Studies* 37, no. 2 (1998): 192–221; Guy Ortolano, *The Two Cultures Controversy: Science, Literature and Cultural Politics in Postwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

identity.⁵ The idea that Britain did not have any intellectuals emerged in the nineteenth century in tandem with the emergence of the term “intellectual.” The noun intellectual was originally imported from France during the Dreyfus Affair and was derived from the French *intellectuel*, meaning that it was frequently seen as something “foreign” and “other” in Britain.⁶ In a French context, the term *intellectuel* was synonymous with interventions in politics, but this function was not widely accepted in early twentieth-century Britain.⁷ Being an intellectual was frequently portrayed in a negative light *because* the term was seen as one emanating from continental Europe. This was bolstered by certain qualities being associated with the national identity; England was frequently seen as valuing qualities such as pragmatism, empiricism, and understatedness, whereas France (and the European continent) was by contrast seen as valuing characteristics such as abstract rationalism, rhetoric, and exaggeration. An additional manifestation of this could be seen in the idea that Britain valued character over intellect.⁸

While there were many individuals who performed the function of intellectuals in early twentieth-century Britain, this was framed by a discourse that denied their existence in those terms and saw this as something other or foreign. Examples of this anti-intellectual discourse can be found in a range of publications. Speaking in 1913, William Inge, the dean of St. Paul’s Cathedral claimed that there was an “ingrained contempt” for intellectual life in England.⁹ An editorial in the *Yorkshire Post* in 1930 claimed that the term “intellectual” was “a word of fear” in Britain. It was written in response to a conference of the International Federation of Intellectual Workers being held in London. At this conference, the British delegation refused to recognize the title “intellectual,” instead opting for the title of “professional or non-manual workers.” The editorial suggested that “a Frenchman or a German is flattered by being called ‘intellectual’ while a true Englishman regards this epithet with a particular uneasiness, if not as a veiled insult.” Intellectual qualities could only be tolerated when concealed by something else, such as lightheartedness, or when mixed with “other qualities more tradi-

5 Heyck, “Myths and Meanings,” 192–221; Collini, *Absent Minds*; Philip Nind, “British Industry and the Anti-Intellectual Tradition,” *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* 133, no. 5345 (1985): 329–340.

6 Ruth Harris, *The Man on Devil’s Island: Alfred Dreyfus and the Affair that Divided France* (London: Penguin 2011); Christophe Charle, *Birth of the Intellectuals 1880–1900* (Cambridge: Polity, 2015).

7 Collini, *Absent Minds*, 49–50; Christophe Charle, *The Birth of the Intellectuals: 1880–1900* (Cambridge: Polity, 2015), 2.

8 Collini, *Absent Minds*, 69; Heyck, “Myths and Meanings,” 200.

9 “Anti-intellectualism,” *The Globe*, 16 October 1913, 2.

tionally British.”¹⁰ It was notable that while unions of intellectual workers were being formed across Europe in the early 1920s, their equivalent in Britain was called the National Federation of Professional, Technical, Administrative and Supervisory Workers.¹¹

There was a widespread view that to be an intellectual was foreign and that the label was pejorative. Alfred Zimmern, a classicist and pioneer in the study of international relations who worked closely with the League and its Institute for Intellectual Cooperation, wrote in 1928 that “Englishmen delight, indeed, in proclaiming their distrust of the things of the mind” and claimed that one of their “traditional pleasures,” almost “a national sport,” was “to fling darts of good natured irony against the lover of ideas.”¹² Zimmern contrasted this to how ideas were valued in Continental Europe, where “To be illogical [. . .] is to be convicted of social lapse and, in the case of a hardened offender, to qualify for the asylum. In England it is the apostle of logic who is considered a fit subject for confinement: he belongs to the study or the sanctum where the tides of real life cannot penetrate.” In Zimmern’s words, this was all an “islander’s device,” as Britain had brought together intellect and practical life at many points in its history, most notably during the Industrial Revolution and the Great War.¹³

Until the 1930s, to be an intellectual in Britain did not always have a clear meaning but typically entailed an individual with a qualification or eminence in a particular field “speaking out” to a wider audience.¹⁴ The term came into greater usage and took on greater clarity in the 1930s against the polarizing backdrop of the “culture wars” and writers and scholars engaging in political ideologies such as communism or political issues such as the Spanish Civil War. Starting in the 1930s, being an intellectual thus took on greater political connotations, and people frequently spoke of “left-wing” or “right-wing” intellectuals.¹⁵ When a group of writers including Leonard and Virginia Woolf, Norman Angell, J.B.S. Haldane, E.M. Forster, and Gilbert Murray wrote to *The Times* in August 1936 to declare their sympathy for the democratic Spanish government during the civil war, they were criticized as not representative of the British people *because* they were “self-styled intellec-

¹⁰ “Intellectual,” *Yorkshire Post*, 17 September 1930, 8.

¹¹ Tomás Irish, *Feeding the Mind: Humanitarianism and the Reconstruction of European Intellectual Life, 1919–1933* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024), 205.

¹² Alfred Zimmern, *Learning and Leadership: A Study of the Needs and Possibilities of International Intellectual Cooperation* (London: Oxford University Press, 1928), 70–71.

¹³ Zimmern, *Learning and Leadership*, 70–71.

¹⁴ Collini, *Absent Minds*, 28–33, 47–48.

¹⁵ Rodden, “Political Sociology,” 253–254; Collini, *Absent Minds*, 33.

tuals.”¹⁶ This polarization of intellectuals in the 1930s was famously criticized by George Orwell in his 1940 essay “Inside the Whale,” where he concluded that the history of the 1930s “seems to justify the opinion that the writer does well to keep out of politics.”¹⁷

Historian and theorist of international relations E.H. Carr offered a further critique of intellectuals by the end of the 1930s that centered on what he felt was their failure to prevent Europe’s slide into conflict. In *The Twenty Years’ Crisis* (published in 1939), Carr discussed the role of intellectuals in politics and, in particular, the League of Nations. He argued that this represented one of the greatest examples of the League’s utopianism and “insistence on general principles.” He contrasted the intellectual to the bureaucrat, who, he argued, thought empirically. The failings of intellectuals were the same as the failings of utopianism, namely their inability “to understand existing reality and the way in which their own standards are rooted in it.”¹⁸ Speaking that same year, philosopher Bertrand Russell argued that the problem was that intellectuals and experts were not listened to concerning matters of international importance, citing as evidence the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, where teams of academic experts had been brought to the French capital to advise the politicians. Russell claimed that the group able to make a difference in the modern world were not the intellectuals but those whom he termed the “technicians,” such as those who could invent “an adequate defense against airplanes.”¹⁹ Russell blamed anti-intellectualism on “some very strong passion which is [. . .] incapable of being gratified,” meaning that “people take an irrational point of view in order not to see that it can’t be gratified.”²⁰ By the outbreak of the Second World War, anti-intellectualism in Britain had taken on a number of forms deriving from either an association with other countries, engagement with (left-wing) politics, or involvement in international affairs.

16 “To The Editor of The Times,” *The Times*, 19 August 1936, 6; “The Manifesto on Spain,” *The Times*, 7 September 1936, 8.

17 George Orwell, “Inside the Whale,” in *The Collected, Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell. Volume 1: An Age Like This, 1920–1940* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1968), 518.

18 E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1946), 14.

19 Bertrand Russell, “The Role of the Intellectual in the Modern World,” *American Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 4 (1939): 491–498.

20 Russell, “Role of the Intellectual,” 494.

The League of Nations and the CIC

Following Carr’s paradigmatic polemic in the *Twenty Years’ Crisis*, the League of Nations became synonymous with failure in the historiography that developed over much of the remainder of the twentieth century. However, there has been a substantial reappraisal of the League in recent decades. The realist-inspired focus on the failure of the League in terms of preventing the outbreak of war in 1939 has been replaced by an exploration of the work done by the international body in a myriad of fields, including humanitarianism, economic and financial work, mandates, and beyond, as well as identifying continuities between the League and subsequent international organizations.²¹ This new approach to the life of the League has opened up new and fresh approaches to understanding the ways in which individual states interacted with the Geneva-based organization. Within this new historiography, the League’s work on intellectual cooperation has received growing attention in the works of scholars such as Daniel Laqua, Jean-Jacques Renoliet, Corinne Pernet, and others.²² Allied to this new interest in the institution of the League of Nations, scholars have also begun to explore civic internationalism, or the “grassroots” national organizations intended to buttress

21 Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations 1920–1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Nicholas Mulder, *The Economic Weapon: The Rise of Sanctions as a Tool of Modern War* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2022); Bruno Cabanes, *The Great War and the Origins of Humanitarianism 1918–1924* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (London: Penguin, 2012); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Jay Winter and Antoine Prost, *René Cassin and Human Rights: From the Great War to the Universal Declaration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Zara Steiner, *The Lights that Failed: European International History, 1919–1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

22 Jo-Anne Pemberton, “The Changing Shape of Intellectual Co-operation: From the League of Nations to UNESCO,” *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 58, no. 1 (2012): 34–50; Jean-Jacques Renoliet, *L’UNESCO oubliée: La Société des nations et la coopération intellectuelle, 1919–1946* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1999); Daniel Laqua, “Transnational Intellectual Cooperation, the League of Nations, and the Problem of Order,” *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (2011): 223–247; Jimena Canales, “Einstein, Bergson, and the Experiment that Failed: Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations,” *MLN* 120, no. 5 (2005): 1168–1191; Corinne A. Pernet, “Twists, Turns, and Dead Alleys: The League of Nations and Intellectual Cooperation in Times of War,” *Journal of Modern European History* 12, no. 3 (2014): 342–358; Tomás Irish, “The ‘Moral Basis’ of Reconstruction? Humanitarianism, Intellectual Relief and the League of Nations, 1918–1925,” *Modern Intellectual History* 17, no. 3 (2020): 769–800; Irish, *Feeding the Mind*.

the main body at Geneva and build an international public opinion favorable to the peaceful resolution of international disputes.²³

The idea of “intellectual cooperation” was first proposed by the Belgian delegation at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 but was not included in the final settlements due to the fact that, in the words of one commentator, “it seemed to be rather a decoration than a vital part of the new organization.”²⁴ The International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation was formed in 1922 and met annually in Geneva, home of the League. It was followed in 1925 by an Institute for Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC), established in Paris with financial backing from the French government.

According to an official report written by the French historian and politician Gabriel Hanotaux, members of the International Committee on Intellectual Cooperation were “appointed in consideration of their personal ability and their reputation in learned circles, and without any discrimination as to nationality.”²⁵ Membership was based on (an undefined) cultural authority rather than nationality. At its first meeting in August 1922, the committee was comprised of a group of eminent scholars and writers, including the chair, Henri Bergson (France), as well as figures such as Gilbert Murray (Britain), Marie Curie (France), and Albert Einstein (Germany).²⁶ The report of the CIC’s first meeting identified specific areas for attention – bibliography, scientific, and university cooperation – but also noted the potential for its work to expand. “It immediately became evident,” an official report noted, “that there would be very considerable material for discussion and that the principal difficulty would be to sort the material received and to arrange and select the subject-matter.”²⁷ Over the course of its existence, the League’s intellectual cooperation bod-

23 Helen McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations: Democracy, Citizenship and Internationalism, c. 1918–45* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), Donald Birn, *The League of Nations Union, 1918–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), Sakiko Kaiga, *Britain and the Intellectual Origins of the League of Nations, 1914–1919* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).

24 Kathleen Gibberd, *The League in Our Time* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1933), 189.

25 Cited in Laqua, “Transnational Intellectual Cooperation,” 224.

26 The other members of the inaugural CIC meeting were Jules Destrée (Belgium), George Ellery Hale (United States), D.N. Bannerjea (India), Gonzague de Reynold (Switzerland), Kristine Bonnevie (Norway), A. de Castro (Brazil), F. Ruffini (Italy), L. de Torres Quevedo (Spain). Both Einstein and Hale were prevented from attending the first meeting in August 1922. Hale was later replaced by the US-American physicist Robert Millikan. “The Progress of Science: International Cooperation in Intellectual Work,” *The Scientific Monthly* 15, no. 1 (1922): 89; “League’s Intellectual Committee,” *The Times*, 25 July 1923, 11. League of Nations Archives (LNA), Committee on Intellectual Co-Operation, First Session, held at Geneva from August 1st to 5th, 1922, Report of the Committee to the Council. C-559-1922-XII, 2.

27 LNA C-559-1922-XII, 3.

ies expanded their interests and would take on a vast number of projects encompassing issues such as international education for world peace, the protection of museums and cultural sites, the scientific study of international relations, radio broadcasting, inquiries into unemployment among university graduates, and much beyond.²⁸ And while the CIC ended up receiving much criticism by the 1930s, the value of its pioneering work can be seen in it providing much of the template upon which UNESCO would later be founded. However, despite all this work, it never successfully defined precisely what it meant by “intellectual cooperation.”

Intellectual Cooperation and Othering

“It is a pity,” began a newspaper article in July 1938, “that the International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation suffers from the handicap of an unwieldy name. Otherwise more would be known about the way in which the League of Nations brings together eminent men of letters, scientists and other savants of many nationalities in the cause of peace.”²⁹ With some exceptions, British newspapers were broadly sympathetic to the League of Nations in the 1920s and 1930s.³⁰ The work of the CIC was often reported upon in a mundane and matter-of-fact manner in local and national newspapers. At the same time, these same publications often featured acerbic commentaries about the CIC that tended to fixate on its name. Newspapers variously described the intellectual cooperation bodies as having a “somewhat cumbrous title,”³¹ being “abhorrent to English ears,”³² “very little known, perhaps because of the appalling name!”,³³ having an

28 Susannah Wright, “Creating Liberal Internationalist World Citizens: League of Nations Union Junior Branches in English Secondary Schools, 1919–1939,” *Paedagogica Historica* 56, no. 3 (2020): 321–340; Ken Osborne, “Creating the ‘International Mind’: The League of Nations’ Attempts to Reform History Teaching, 1920–1939,” *History of Education Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (2016): 213–240; Jan Stöckmann, *The Architects of International Relations: Building a Discipline, Designing the World, 1914–1940* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022); Annamaria Duci, “Europe and the Artistic Patrimony of the Interwar Period: The International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations,” in *Europe in Crisis: Intellectuals and the European Idea, 1917–1957*, eds. Matthew d’Auria and Mark Hewitson (Oxford and New York: Berghahn, 2015), 227–242.

29 “First Class Brains at Geneva,” *Ashbourne Telegraph*, 8 July 1938, 6.

30 Birn, *League of Nations Union*, 132–133.

31 “The Best Books,” *The Scotsman*, 10 April 1925, 6.

32 “Professors at Geneva,” *Daily Echo*, Northampton, 25 July 1928, 2.

33 “Work at Geneva,” *Daily Echo*, Northampton, 9 July 1929, 2.

“unattractive name!”,³⁴ being “clumsily” named,³⁵ and having a “terrifying name” that made the “average man fight shy of it.”³⁶ In 1927, *The Times* made reference to the “so-called” International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation.³⁷

British hostility to the idea of intellectual cooperation was often traced back to its origins when British delegates unanimously voted against the establishment of the committee. In 1926, the League of Nations Union president Robert Cecil tried to explain British indifference toward intellectual cooperation by citing different national cultural traditions. He argued that “the Latins” sought to apply a general principle to problems, whereas the British sought to deal with “the actual difficulty before them.” Cecil claimed that Britain was initially hostile toward the CIC because it was seen as something “vague and ‘high falutin.’”³⁸ Writing in 1929, Gwilym Davies, a Welsh Baptist minister and supporter of the League, recalled the same hostility on the occasion of the establishment of the CIC. The only instance, he argued, in which the seven British member states of the League had been “enthusiastically unanimous” on an issue was when they decided not to grant any further support to intellectual cooperation.³⁹

Criticism of the idea of “intellectual cooperation” in English-language sources predates the intellectual controversies of the 1930s and seemed to derive primarily from the “foreignness” of the term and the institution itself. These criticisms also assumed that to be an intellectual was a European phenomenon and suggested that Britain did not possess any of its own. This was not true: Britain had many figures who might be considered intellectuals with regard to their public function.⁴⁰ Indeed, the chair of the CIC between 1928 and 1939 was Gilbert Murray, Regius Professor of Greek at the University of Oxford and one of Britain’s leading intellectuals.⁴¹ As the term “intellectual cooperation” was never defined by the League of Nations or the CIC, there were many scurrilous attempts to satirize the terminology. In a broadcast on the BBC in 1930, Murray noted that the

34 “Professor Gilbert Murray Declares the League is Doing its Job,” *Daily Herald*, 10 November 1930, 8.

35 “A League of Brains,” *Bexhill-on-Sea Observer*, 8 September 1934, 2.

36 “League of Nations Notes,” *The Whitstable Times and Tankerton Press*, 28 January 1928, 2.

37 “The League and the Schools,” *The Times*, 1 August 1927, 11.

38 “Lord Cecil on the League: ‘Unity in Diversity,’” *The Times*, 7 January 1926, 7.

39 Gwilym Davies, “Wales and the World,” *Welsh Outlook* 16, no. 12 (1929): 376.

40 Collini, *Absent Minds*, 46–52.

41 Christopher Stray, *Gilbert Murray Reassessed: Hellenism, Theatre & International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Gilbert Murray, *An Unfinished Autobiography: With Contributions by his Friends* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1960); Peter Wilson, “Gilbert Murray and International Relations: Hellenism, Liberalism, and International Intellectual Cooperation as a Path to Peace,” *Review of International Studies* 37 (2011): 881–909.

term “intellectual cooperation” sounded “absurd” in English but was “all right in French or Italian.” Murray argued that since the foundation of the CIC intellectual cooperation had been “taken to mean two different things: first a general cooperation of nations in thought and mind as well as in act; secondly, a special cooperation among what are called the ‘intellectuals’ of different nations – the teachers, writers, artists, men of science and learning.”⁴² The fact that intellectual cooperation itself was a translation from French – a language and political culture in which being *un intellectuel* was imbued with greater clarity and carried with it different functions than was the case across the Channel – surely also led to feelings that it was not quite British. This was especially the case by the late 1920s when the publication of Julien Benda’s *La trahison des clercs* caused a major debate in France concerning the rectitude of intellectual engagements in political matters. When the book was translated for a British audience in 1928, it was titled *The Great Betrayal*.⁴³ The distinctions between the different meanings and implications of the term intellectual cooperation were never adequately cleared up in the 1920s and 1930s.

The League of Nations published a vast range of publicity materials in order to explain its purpose and the functions of its subsidiary bodies to a wide audience, from adults to children. These works are revealing in how they attempted to explain the importance of intellectual cooperation for a general reader. One book, published by the League as a guide to teachers, argued that “intellectual activity affects what is most intimate and profound in the life of peoples” and that “the Committee on Intellectual Co-operation in itself represented an act of rapprochement between the nations and a valuable jumping off ground.”⁴⁴ Still, evidence from public discussions in Britain suggests that a great deal of uncertainty remained regarding the purpose, scope, and necessity of intellectual cooperation.

British criticisms of the CIC represented an opportunity not only to assail the League but also the idea of the intellectual. A satirical piece by “Derso” in the *Illustrated London News* in August 1930 lampooned the CIC at length and highlighted the apparent absurdity of an individual with learning in a particular niche area being able to comment intelligently upon international relations. Here, “Derso” held a conversation with an intellectual who was “an expert in oriental carpets and a philosopher” and concluded that while the man may have been “an expert in Ori-

⁴² Gilbert Murray, “Intellectual Cooperation,” BBC Broadcast, 5 March 1930, Bodleian Library Oxford (BLO) MS Murray 277/97.

⁴³ Collini, *Absent Minds*, 288.

⁴⁴ *The Aims, Methods and Activity of the League of Nations* (Geneva: Secretariat of the League of Nations, 1935), 155–157.

ental carpets [. . .] he knew nothing about statesmen.”⁴⁵ The piece suggested that it was absurd that men and women with no specific expert knowledge in the field of international relations would apply their learning to the problems of the world based on learning in a particular, and often unrelated, area. By bringing together intellectuals of widely differing backgrounds, this was more or less what the CIC claimed to do.

While the CIC attracted criticism from afar, often fixating on its name or the mystery surrounding what it actually did, those who observed it up close were often no more generous in their appraisals. These first-hand accounts frequently highlighted an opposition between the British way of doing things and the approaches adopted by non-British members. In September 1923, for example, a journalist for a newspaper in the British midlands attended a session of the CIC in Geneva and wrote somewhat flippantly about its multilingualism. It was reported that “one could not enthuse muchly over the proceedings. Professor Bergson spoke charmingly in perfect French, a Swiss professor declaimed in imperfect Swiss-French, and an Italian savant tickled the ears of his audience in somber Italian-French; and we all, to show our master of these foreign tongues, applauded most adequately.”⁴⁶ In 1929, the words of Mary Agnes Hamilton, a member of parliament who was part of the British delegation to the League Assembly, received wide coverage in British newspapers. On her return from Geneva, she said that “this committee is a joke to everybody except itself; but, having taken it up, we must make a serious effort to make a job of it and take it out of it [sic] atmosphere of slight hilarity which now exists.”⁴⁷ And, writing in December 1929, Gwilym Davies, a keen supporter of the CIC, argued that as newspapers were conducting their end-of-year stocktaking, “it is likely that, amongst ourselves, little will be said of the intellectual side. Abroad British people are not considered to be much concerned with the things of the mind.”⁴⁸

45 “‘Derso’ on the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation,” *Illustrated London News*, 30 August 1930, 364.

46 “Other ‘innocents’ abroad,” *Leamington Spa Courier and Warwickshire Standard*, 21 September 1923, 7.

47 “Mrs Hamilton M.P., on Geneva Politeness,” *Lancashire Evening Post*, 18 October 1929, 9.

48 Gwilym Davies, “Wales and the World,” *Welsh Outlook* 16, no. 12 (1929): 376.

Defending Intellectual Cooperation

Accounts of the work of the CIC were not overwhelmingly negative. Newspapers frequently presented accounts of the committee’s many activities. In July 1924, *The Mercury* wrote that “Intellectual Co-operation is at all events, no experiment. Its place in the history of learning assures of its value.”⁴⁹ In February 1929, the *Nottingham Journal* claimed that its establishment was “one of the most important and statesmanlike decisions of the League in its earlier stages” since “intellectual opinion all over the world is in a key position to influence public opinion.”⁵⁰ Meanwhile, in September 1929, the under-secretary of state for foreign affairs, Hugh Dalton, referred to the “great conception of intellectual cooperation.”⁵¹

Even allowing for some positive coverage of the efforts of intellectual cooperation, the Geneva-based committee and its advocates frequently found themselves having to defend or advocate for its work in public, as did supporters of the League of Nations more generally by the mid-to-late 1930s. The most strident defenses of intellectual cooperation unsurprisingly came from Gilbert Murray. As chair of the CIC and a prominent public figure in Britain, it was understandable that Murray would become a firm and enthusiastic proponent of its importance.

In 1936, Murray sparred with the novelist H.G. Wells in a public debate that played out in the pages of a national newspaper. In a public letter to *The Times* in 1936, Murray wrote of his support of the CIC. He argued that if “the goal of British policy is the appeasement of Europe,” this required cooperation between governments of different sorts, especially those that could “outside politics, have the power of both guiding and interpreting the currents of thought and feeling in their respective countries.” Murray claimed that the CIC’s inclusiveness was key to its effectiveness, with even non-League members participating in different ways.⁵² He also asserted that the British government had adopted an attitude of philistinism while at the same time noting with some sarcasm that many British politicians were “badly tainted with the virus of intellect.”⁵³

Wells, a supporter of the League in its early days who later became a staunch critic, launched a strident criticism of the efforts of intellectual cooperation in re-

49 “Co-operation among the intellectuals,” *The Mercury*, 18 July 1924, 6.

50 “The New International Brotherhood,” *The Nottingham Journal*, 12 February 1929, 6.

51 “Chinese Resolution to League Assembly Opposed,” *Belfast News-letter*, 23 September 1929, 5.

52 “Appeasement in Europe: The Intellectual Links,” *The Times*, 25 September 1936, 10.

53 *Ibid.*

sponse to Murray's letter.⁵⁴ He wondered whether the committee even existed in reality, sarcastically asking whether it was "anything more than a phantom with a postal address" and disingenuously claiming that he had been "trying to find out what were its activities" for years.⁵⁵ In a telephone reply given to the *Daily News*, Murray claimed that Wells' comments were "perfect nonsense" and that he "always refused to know anything about the committee."⁵⁶ He elaborated on these comments in a piece in another letter to *The Times* a few days later, claiming that Wells was ignorant regarding the CIC because he was opposed to it. "He does not know about it because he does not like it. It is like a famous person's reason for not knowing foreign languages: he does not know them because he does not like foreigners."⁵⁷

George Bernard Shaw's *Geneva*, a satirical play about the League of Nations published in 1938, began at the International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation. Written at a time when the League was increasingly sidelined in international affairs and subject to widespread criticisms for its inability to stem the tide of international aggression, it was significant that the lampoon began with the CIC. Its Geneva office was equipped with "secondhand furniture, much the worse for wear" where a young English secretary, hitherto working on a card index, put her feet up on the table while smoking a cigarette.⁵⁸ The scenes that followed painted the CIC as underfunded and understaffed, its work "mere compilation" rather than anything meaningful or substantial. A German-Jewish character asked how "the intellectual giants who form your committee bringing the enormous dynamic force of their brains, their prestige, their authority, to bearing the destinies of the nations?" and was told that the extent of their involvement in terms of practical work was to have "their names on our notepaper."⁵⁹

Cumulatively, the criticisms of the CIC took aim at an institution and its activities while portraying it as thoroughly European and irreconcilable with British life. They emphasized not only the general "foreignness" of intellectuals to Britain, but also a set of bureaucratic practices such as the accumulation of information and a belief in the power of rational intellect to solve international problems. George Or-

54 Simon J. James, *Maps of Utopia: H.G. Wells, Modernity, and the End of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 164; John S. Partington, *Building Cosmopolis: The Political Thought of H.G. Wells* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2016), 105.

55 "The C.I.C. in Paris," *The Times*, 28 September 1936, 13.

56 "Two Famous Peace Men in War of Words," *Daily News*, 29 September 1936, 3.

57 "The C.I.C. in Paris," *The Times*, 30 September 1936, 8.

58 G.B. Shaw, *Geneva, Cymbeline Refinished, & Good King Charles* (London: Constable and Company, 1946), 29.

59 Shaw, *Geneva*, 31.

well in his 1940 essay “Inside the Whale” spoke of many writers utilizing “Geneva language,” which he implied was impersonal, detached, and cold. This idea permeates many of the anti-CIC polemics of the preceding decades.⁶⁰ However, as demonstrated in the following section, there was a sharp distinction between the idea of intellectual cooperation as embodied by the CIC and its practice away from Geneva.

Intellectual Cooperation in Practice

By 1938, Gilbert Murray had served as president of the International Committee for Intellectual Cooperation for almost a decade. He reflected on his experiences as Britain’s best-known advocate of the League of Nations’ cultural and educational policies in a letter published in *The Times*. “It has always seemed to me an odd thing that, though an Englishman has for several years been president of the organization,” as well as the widespread involvement of British scholars and administrators in its work, “the committee has never been invited to meet in England and the British Government has never made any contribution to the work of the institute.” “I can hardly believe,” Murray wrote, “that it can be permanently cold-shouldered simply on the ground that the British people take no stock in mere moral and intellectual values.”⁶¹

Murray claimed that not only was there a general skepticism surrounding the work of intellectual cooperation, but also that there had been a pronounced reluctance to work with it on certain issues. The potential vastness of the field of intellectual cooperation meant that it theoretically encompassed a great deal, and there is substantial evidence that supporters of the League in Britain engaged with many of the initiatives emanating from Geneva in different ways. The League of Nations Union, for example, was a mass movement whose membership peaked at 406,000 people in 1931 and which was responsible for the Peace Ballot, which mobilized almost twelve million British individuals in 1935.⁶²

There is a great deal of evidence suggesting that British people engaged with the efforts of intellectual cooperation but only when it was labelled in other ways. The best example of this is the work undertaken with schoolchildren. Helen McCarthy has argued that “if there was one place in interwar Britain

⁶⁰ Orwell, “Inside the Whale,” 497.

⁶¹ “Good Will Among Nations,” *The Times*, 31 December 1938, 8.

⁶² Birn, *League of Nations Union*, 131; Martin Ceadel, “The First British Referendum: The Peace Ballot, 1934–5,” *English Historical Review* 95, no. 377 (1980): 810–839.

where the fact of the League's existence was hard to miss, it was the classroom."⁶³ The civic culture that emerged around children and youth was premised upon the idea that the next generation would need to be educated to understand the League and work with it in order to avoid conflict. Youth questions generally became part of the remit of the CIC, which formed an Advisory Committee on League of Nations Teaching and oversaw a project to revise school textbooks in order to excise belligerent narratives relating to the war.⁶⁴ As education in Britain was decentralized, it was often up to individual schools or teachers to engage with the League in their teaching ethos, something that many did, with Wales being prominent through its enthusiastic engagement with the League.⁶⁵ Engagement with an aspect of the intellectual cooperation agenda could also be seen in the efforts of the League of Nations Union Junior Branches. Often established at schools, Junior Branches constituted forums through which children and young people could continue their internationalist formation. While their activities varied from case to case, Junior Branches put on an array of activities including lectures by visiting speakers, mock assemblies, exhibitions, pen-pal schemes, and competitions to win a trip to Geneva.⁶⁶

Evidence of a reluctance and hesitation to work with the CIC was the most apparent in instances involving direct relationships between the committee and its counterparts in Britain. This was especially the case when it came to issues such as gathering information for inquiries undertaken by the League, such as the 1923 CIC investigation into international intellectual life.⁶⁷ The key source of tension on that occasion – and others – seems to have stemmed from the fact that the CIC dealt with the Universities Bureau of the British Empire (UBBE), established in 1912 to bring together universities in an imperial setting.⁶⁸ The interactions between the UBBE and CIC suggested that the former saw the latter as not only encroaching into its sphere of operation but also fundamentally misunderstanding the nature of British higher education.⁶⁹ Alex Hill, the secretary of UBBE, as well as several university vice-chancellors, received many requests for statistical information from Geneva, and many seemed to quickly grow weary of

63 McCarthy, *British People*, 104.

64 Osborne, "Creating the 'International Mind'," 213–240.

65 National Library of Wales, NLW V/5/28–60; Stuart Booker, "Wales and the League of Nations, c.1918–1945", PhD Dissertation, Swansea University, 2023.

66 Wright, "Creating"; McCarthy, *British People*, 103–131.

67 Irish, "Moral Basis," 796–799.

68 Tamson Pietsch, *Empire of Scholars: Universities, Networks and the British Academic World 1850–1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 100–103.

69 Hill to Halecki, 23 February 1923, National Archives of the UK, Kew (NAUK), ED 25/1.

these requests. In December 1925, Hill wrote to all vice-chancellors and principals of universities and colleges in Britain to explain that he had informed the CIC that “the heads of the universities of Great Britain and Ireland do not welcome questionnaires,” instructing them to refer to the UBBE’s yearbook for future inquiries.⁷⁰ Hill was less restrained in private. For instance, he wrote to Joseph Wells, the vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, that the League’s requests for information had put “various people, especially myself, to a great deal of trouble” and doubted whether the information served “any useful purpose,” speculating flippantly – in a manner that emphasized the association of the League with bureaucracy – that “it is in a pigeon-hole in Geneva.”⁷¹ Gilbert Murray wrote privately that “the attitude taken by the Bureau of Universities has shown no particular cordiality.”⁷²

The most striking evidence of a reluctance to engage institutionally with the CIC can be seen with the establishment of a British National Committee on Intellectual Cooperation (BNCIC). Starting in 1923, the CIC asked member nations to set up national committees, which were intended to enable the Geneva-based committee to decentralize and outsource some of its work. National committees could serve as points of contact for the various intellectual cooperation initiatives taking place and could both gather information and disseminate it as necessary.⁷³ Committees had been set up in eighteen countries by 1924, most of which were located in Europe and many of which were new states set up in the aftermath of the First World War.⁷⁴ This number had grown to thirty-eight by 1937, of which fourteen were situated outside of Europe.⁷⁵

Britain was slow in terms of setting up its national committee. In 1927, as he planned the establishment of the committee, Gilbert Murray wrote to Julien Luchaire of his progress: “we must somehow convince British opinion, which no doubt tends to be over-practical, that the CIC and the Institute are achieving definite and useful results. We have to overcome a good deal of criticism and prejudice.”⁷⁶ Despite the misgivings of Hill and others, a British Committee for Intellectual Cooperation was set up in 1928, with its first meeting chaired by historian H.A.L. Fisher.⁷⁷

⁷⁰ Hill to Vice Chancellors and Principals, 30 December 1925, NAUK, ED25/5.

⁷¹ Hill to Wells, 5 January 1925, NAUK, ED25/5.

⁷² Murray to Luchaire, 14 November 1925, UNESCO Archives, Paris (UNESCO), A.I.35.

⁷³ “Suggestions relative to the Organisation of National Committees on International Co-operation,” 5 December 1923, C.L.20.1924,XII, Annex II. International Committee on Intellectual Co-operation, NAUK, ED 25/1.

⁷⁴ BLO, MS Murray 266/122–123.

⁷⁵ *National Committees on Intellectual Cooperation* (Geneva: League of Nations, 1937), 3–4.

⁷⁶ Gilbert Murray to Luchaire, 25 February 1927, UNESCO Archives, A.I.12.

⁷⁷ Minutes of Meeting of LNU of May 17, 1928, NAUK, ED25/2; BLO, MS Zimmern 86.

The BNCIC was populated with figures drawn from learned societies, such as the Royal Society and the British Academy. For much of its existence it was chaired by Sir Frederic Kenyon, a former president of the British Academy. By the mid-1930s, the BNCIC received a paltry annual £150 from the British government, which, unlike other national governments, also refused to make a financial contribution to the work of the International Institute on Intellectual Cooperation in Paris.⁷⁸

Even once established, the British National Committee was not an especially enthusiastic or active body. In fact, when the British Council was established in 1934, newspapers noted that it would perform much of the same task as that for which the League's national committee had been established.⁷⁹ An editorial in the *Manchester Guardian* noted that the establishment of the British Council should draw attention to the fact that the CIC had been "morally and materially starved of official British support. Yet its purpose has always been to accomplish on international lines much of what the British Council now proposes to attempt nationally."⁸⁰ By 1935, H.R. Cummings, who worked for the British League of Nations Union, wrote to the CIC secretary, Jean Daniel de Monténach, that "no one ever hears anything" of the British national committee.⁸¹ It had, however, been prominent in supporting the International Studies Conference that took place in London in 1935 as well as initiatives relating to moral disarmament.

The establishment of the British Council brought tensions to a head as both the BC and BNCIC seemed to step on each other's toes in promoting international mobility of teachers and students. As the BC developed and the BNCIC continued to struggle for funds, relations deteriorated, and by the late 1930s, leading figures at the Foreign Office such as Rex Leeper proposed that the BC should take over the BNCIC. Charles Bridge, the secretary of the BC, stated that "there is no doubt at all that it is the wish of the Foreign Office that the British Council shall take over the functions of the British National Committee on Intellectual Co-operation." Moreover, he bluntly stated that the FO wanted to get rid of Gilbert Murray who had made everything "a one-man show." Bridge claimed that "the Foreign Office would be glad to see him go."⁸² As war broke out in 1939, the BNCIC continued to operate under the presidency of Sir Frederic Kenyon, thus leaving the conflict unresolved.

⁷⁸ Undated account of the work of the BNCIC, NAUK, BW/2/163.

⁷⁹ Alice Byrne, "A Sound Investment"? British Cultural Diplomacy and Overseas Students: The British Council's Students Committee, 1935–1939," *Contemporary European History* 30, no. 2 (2021): 265–283.

⁸⁰ "Intellectual Co-operation under the League," *Manchester Guardian*, 23 March 1935, LNA R3992, 5B/17724/1137.

⁸¹ Cummings to Monténach, 20 March 1935, LNA R3992, 5B/17224/1137.

⁸² Memorandum of the Sec. Gen. of the British Council, 10 August 1938, NAUK, BW/2/163.

Towards UNESCO

The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 brought a great deal of internationalist activity to a halt. The CIC held its final meeting in July 1939 while the Paris-based Institute ceased operation after 1940, with many of its key members fleeing Europe and seeking to continue the work of intellectual cooperation in other parts of the world, notably in Latin America.⁸³ Meanwhile, the League’s buildings in Geneva were operated by a skeleton staff. In Britain, hostile attitudes remained toward intellectuals: in a famous wartime essay, George Orwell reasserted the idea that compared to other parts of Europe, the English people were “not intellectual.”⁸⁴ And yet, by the end of 1945, the constitution for a body – the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – had been agreed upon at a conference in London. The creation of UNESCO served as an important coda that elucidates how Britain’s experiences of interwar intellectual cooperation played a prominent role in wartime discussions.

During the Second World War, Gilbert Murray drafted a memorandum for the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME). Populated by ministers and educationalists in exile, CAME first met in London in late 1942. Murray’s memorandum set out the background and achievements of intellectual cooperation and presented suggestions for the future. Murray reflected that “the publicity of the CIC was bad. Perhaps real savants are not apt to advertise themselves. Perhaps this country is less well-informed than others about the whole movement.” He went on to suggest that if the movement had been better funded, it could have achieved greater success.⁸⁵ In an influential 1943 pamphlet, Gwilym Davies wrote that “on intellectual cooperation, it owed nothing to the British as emphasis on the intellectual is not regarded as their strong point [. . .] all along there was a tendency amongst the British to think of ‘Intellectual Co-operation’ as French for ‘high-brow’.”⁸⁶ British planning for UNESCO was premised upon learning the lessons of interwar intellectual cooperation, which meant changing the elitist emphasis and the name.

The debate over the name of the new organization played out at the London Conference in November 1945. The proposal that emerged through CAME, in con-

⁸³ Pernet, “Twists, Turns,” 342–4.

⁸⁴ George Orwell, “The Lion and the Unicorn,” in *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Volume II*, eds. Sonia Orwell and Ian Angus (London: Secker and Warburg, 1968), 58.

⁸⁵ Gilbert Murray, “Intellectual Cooperation,” UNESCO Archives, Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, London 1942–45. Vol VII: Drafting the UNESCO Constitution, 9.

⁸⁶ Gwilym Davies, *Intellectual Cooperation Between the Two Wars* (London: Council for Education in World Citizenship, 1943), 4.

junction with collaborators in the United States, called for the creation of an “Educational and Cultural Organization,” while a separate French proposal, written in close collaboration with the recently-revived International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation, instead sought a “United Nations Organization of Intellectual Co-operation.”⁸⁷ The British delegates were supported by the US-Americans in their opposition to a name including the term “intellectual cooperation”; one account of the discussions in London claimed that there was a reluctance to use the term “intellectual” in the name as this constituted “one word in French and quite another in English.”⁸⁸ The decision to adopt the name UNESCO demonstrated a determination not only to develop a distance between the initiatives of the League and the new United Nations, but also to distance the organization from the anti-intellectualism having undermined British interaction with the League’s educational and cultural initiatives.

Conclusion

British anti-intellectualism was not merely a phenomenon of the interwar years. Speaking in the run-up to the Brexit referendum in 2016, Michael Gove – a government minister and advocate that Britain leave the European Union – argued that “people in this country have had enough of experts.”⁸⁹ He was speaking about the fact that no economists had backed Brexit and that the vast majority of economists argued that it would not be in Britain’s economic interests to do so. While Gove did not specifically refer to “intellectuals,” his comments brought to mind much older debates suggesting that intellect and learning were associated with other places – and not Britain. And while the League of Nations is not the European Union, some parallels are noticeable in the language used to describe the activities of both.

Britain’s engagement with the League of Nations and intellectual cooperation in the 1920s and 1930s epitomized salient characteristics in British attitudes toward intellectuals. Antipathy toward intellectual cooperation stemmed from the related ideas that Britain itself had no intellectuals and that “intellectuals” were

⁸⁷ “Conference for the Establishment,” 1–9. The US and China favored the name UNESCO, whereas India preferred the French proposal for an “Intellectual Organisation” of the United Nations.

⁸⁸ “Summary and Analysis of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,” *The Defences of Peace: Documents Relating to UNESCO: The United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organisation*, Part II (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1946), 13.

⁸⁹ <https://www.ft.com/content/3be49734-29cb-11e6-83e4-abc22d5d108c>.

something foreign and other. The twin bases for intellectual cooperation – Paris and Geneva – seemed to confirm this sense of otherness to British observers, while the term “intellectual cooperation,” imported from French and with different connotations in the translation, provided further evidence of this. The cynicism aimed at the CIC differed in terms of roots and themes compared to that aimed at the left-wing intellectuals of the 1930s, thus demonstrating that as much as there were many definitions of the word intellectual in this period, there were also many manifestations of anti-intellectualism.⁹⁰ From a British perspective, the creation of UNESCO from the ashes of the League of Nations did not represent a distinct change in attitudes *per se*, but a desire to learn the lessons of the interwar period and to circumvent latent anti-intellectualism. It certainly did not mark the end of British skepticism regarding intellectuals and experts but rather demonstrated how the builders of international institutions sought to address it.

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⁹⁰ On the intellectual divisions of the 1930s, see E.P. Thompson’s famous essay (and riposte to Orwell), “Outside the Whale,” *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays* (London: Merlin Press, 1978), 1–33.

