

A CENTURY OF INTERNATIONALISMS

The Promise and Legacies of the League of Nations



LISBON
19 and 20 September 2019

Call for Papers

Intergovernmental organizations – understood as multilateral institutions created by sovereign states, with their own permanent structures and charged with the long-term pursuit of common goals – are tools for promoting the peaceful resolution of conflicts and facilitating cooperation. By establishing permanent dialogue between governments and trying to promote cooperative relations between peoples at a global level, intergovernmental organizations are a fundamental new element of global politics in the contemporary era. The genealogy and nature of intergovernmental organizations has therefore been the subject of highly relevant political controversy as well as significant debate in academia.

Established in January 1920, at the end of the First World War, the League of Nations was the first permanent multilateral organization set up to maintain peace and collective security, aiming at promoting a new stable and prosperous international order. Although it was meant to be in principle a global organization, European states *de facto* were the central core of founding members. After a decade, it became increasingly clear that the League's performance in addressing major conflicts did not live up to the expectations of guarantying the collective security of member states. Resolutions and sanctions were ineffective against increasingly violent conflicts. In the functional areas, regarding minority rights and in the oversight of the role of imperial powers in mandate territories, the League of Nations created an important precedent but also showed important limitations.

With the suspension of the activities of the League of Nations with the beginning of the Second World War and its subsequent replacement came the idea of a total failure of the League of Nations. But current studies have pointed in new directions in the analysis of the knowledge of the organization. This rehabilitation of the importance of the critical study of the League of Nations has led to new and different readings of its various facets. It is, nevertheless, important to pursue these new approaches not only from an institutional perspective, but also by a more multidimensional and comparative analysis that does greater justice to the rich and important history of the organization. The tools of International History, Global and Transnational History, History of Ideas, Comparative History, Social History, Labour History, History of Communications, History of Health, History of Migration and others allow us to consider the presence and the role of the League of Nations in various scales and spaces, as well as its relationship with a diversity of actors and themes.

The relevance of the League of Nations is also justified by how topical and important many of the issues with which it struggled still are. The growing globalization and mobility of the contemporary era, voluntary or not, generates global problems and norms with enormous national and local impact. It has been in and through intergovernmental organizations that global regimes have been defined in a variety of areas – human rights, drug trafficking, terrorism and refugees. This brings us to the controversial but arguably indispensable role of multilateral organizations in international governance, as standards-makers and managers of the problems and challenges of contemporary societies which require a global response.

To promote the debate between those who study the League of Nations and connected topics we will organize an interdisciplinary conference to be held in Lisbon on 19 and 20 September 2019.

The keynote speakers are:

- Erez Manela (Harvard University)
- Mark Mazower (Columbia University) – to be confirmed
- Nicolas Werth (CNRS)
- Patricia Clavin (University of Oxford)
- Patrick Finney (Aberystwyth University)
- Philippe Rygiel (École Normale Supérieure - Lyon)
- William Mulligan (University College Dublin)

Proposals for 20-minute presentations on issues related to the League of Nations will be accepted, including but not limited to the following topics:

- The genealogy of the concept of intergovernmental organizations;
- Concepts and methodologies for the study of intergovernmental organizations;
- History of intergovernmental organizations;
- The Paris peace talks, the Peace Treaties and the creation of the League of Nations;
- Institutional structure and dynamics of the League of Nations;
- The League of Nations and the relationship with its member states;
- The League of Nations and international civil service;
- The League of Nations and international peace and security;

- The League of Nations and the rights of minorities and refugees;
- The League of Nations, empires and international mandates;
- The League of Nations, social issues and the International Labour Organization (ILO);
- The League of Nations and technical areas;
- The League of Nations and non-state actors;
- The League of Nations and other international organizations;
- The League of Nations, international law and justice;
- The transition from the League of Nations to the United Nations (UN).

Abstracts of presentations (300 words) and biographical notes (250 words) should be sent in English or French or Portuguese to: sdnconferencialisboa@gmail.com

Deadline for submission of abstracts: **31 October 2018**.

Date of notification of acceptance: 15 December 2018.

N.B. Submissions can be made in English, French or Portuguese. However, to facilitate the debate, the organizers encourage participants to use English in their oral presentation.

A publication of some of the papers presented at the conference is a future aim.

The registration will have a fee of 25 EUR.

Organizing Committee

Aurora Almada e Santos (IHC – NOVA FCSH)

Cristina Rodrigues (IHC – NOVA FCSH)

Bruno Cardoso Reis (ISCTE-IUL)

João Paulo Avelãs Nunes (CEIS20 – Universidade de Coimbra)

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