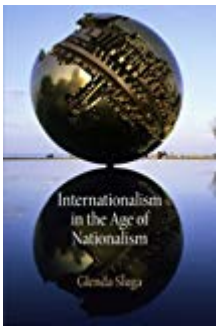
H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Glenda Sluga. *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. 224 pp. $69.95, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8122-4484-7.



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Published on H-Diplo (June, 2014)

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"Internationalism has long been regarded as a story of ideologues and radicals," laments Glenda Sluga (p. 2). In a concise 160 pages of text, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* sets out to correct this misconception. Sluga's central contention is that internationalism should be understood not as diametrically opposed to nationalism, but as a parallel and interconnected phenomenon. Just as various groups made claims on the nation to do everything from assert rights to promote economic development, so too have internationalists envisioned international institutions and sociability as a means of advancing various agendas. Internationalists were thus not utopians but political actors, and represented a much wider range of actors than often assumed. By emphasizing the presence of women and actors from the global South amongst the ranks of internationalists, Sluga aims to recover the "breadth and complexity of internationalism" (p. 8).

Sluga is not the first historian to question the assumption of an inherent opposition between a "realistic" nationalism and a "utopian" internationalism. The literature on the history of international institutions, human rights, and international law is booming, and a number of works have shown how internationalism has supported as well as resisted the exercise of power.[1] But Sluga is right to insist that this reinterpretation has not yet fully penetrated academic consciousness, and it continues to infect histories of internationalism.[2] Histories of international institutions like the League of Nations or the United Nations (UN) tend to be written either as teleological narratives of cultural progress or else as attempts to show that such institutions were not "true" internationalism but rather mere covers for liberal imperialism (p. 152). Both presume a fundamental opposition between internationalism and nationalism. Even those works that confront this duality tend to do so from within the same framework: they are arguing *against* the centrality of the realism/idealism binary rather than offering a new model in its place.[3] Meanwhile, internationalism is invisible in classic writings on nationalism. As Sluga observes, neither Benedict Anderson's

Imagined Communities (1983) nor Eric Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* (1990) even contains an index entry for the term.

To break this divide, Sluga seeks to recover the forgotten arguments and failed projects of twentieth-century liberal internationalism. She does so by providing a wide-ranging account of internationalists themselves. The book proceeds chronologically across four chapters, sandwiched by an introduction and afterword. Chapter 1 covers the creation of internationalism in the late nineteenth century, concluding with the founding of the League of Nations. Chapter 2 examines the "spirit of Geneva" (p. 61) in the 1920s and 30s as internationalists inside and outside the League aimed to use the new institution to promote progress and accord. Chapter 3 explores the "Apogee of Internationalism" at the founding of the United Nations, and chapter 4 considers two moments of transformation: the rise of the "Third World UN" (p. 119) in the 1970s and the emergence of a "human security" framework in the 1990s with its associated doctrine of the "Responsibility to Protect" (p. 143). Tellingly, Sluga sees the latter as a reemergence of earlier moments in internationalist thought "when the prevailing view of political realism leaned toward internationality and being internationally minded" (p. 143). Punctuated by wars, successes, and failures, Sluga's narrative is one of cycles rather than a single rise or decline: "What changed over the course of the twentieth century was the realist weight given to specific aspects of internationalism, what could count as realistic or not, particularly in relation to the relative realism of states, and states as nations" (p. 146). ***Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*** is not an attempt to explain the conditions that made internationalism more or less "realistic" at any particular moment. Rather it is a history of internationalism from the inside out.

Sluga dates the origins of liberal internationalism to the late nineteenth century. It drew on earlier ideas of international association. These included a Romantic sensibility of human brotherhood best encapsulated in Alfred, Lord Tennyson's famous poem "Locksley Hall" ("Till the war-drum throbb'd no longer, and the battle-flags were furl'd / In the Parliament of man, the Federation of the world").[4] Internationalists also relied on Enlightenment assumptions of social progress —a theory likewise embraced by mid-century nationalists who assumed a natural progression of political organization from the family to the tribe to the nation to world government. (The fact that Italian nationalist Giuseppe Garibaldi served as president of the International League of Peace and Liberty in 1867 thus is not illogical, as Sluga notes, p. 4). Yet liberal internationalists self-consciously ignored socialism, the dominant internationalist movement that they aimed to replace. Sluga's internationalists are manifestly ***not*** the "workers of the world." Instead they animated a largely middle-class movement made up of practical-minded men and women.

It is important to Sluga to emphasize the self-conscious practicality of twentieth-century liberal internationalism. Internationalists experienced their efforts not as the search for a utopian future, but as a practical response to a vexing present. Drawing on the "science" of the moment—sociology, psychology, biology, development economics—they argued that "objective facts" made world federation both possible and likely (p. 13). Steam and electricity connected nations and continents, linking labor and capital, fears and dreams. That these material conditions would give rise to international cooperation seemed obvious in the 1890s. One had only to look at already existing institutional manifestations of such cooperation: ten new international organizations emerged each year during that last decade of the nineteenth century. Some of these groups, such as the International Olympic Committee, remain widely known today. Others more narrowly reflected the technology and mentalities of the era: the International Office for Public Hygiene, the International Telegraphic Union, and the International Esperan-

to Association. In each case, these groups provided a practical model of cooperative internationalism at work. As a French observer wrote of the Universal Postal Union: "When I throw a stamped card for 10 centimes into a letter box, to some part of another continent, and it arrives in a few days ... can't I say, even more justly than Socrates, that I am a citizen of the world?" Sluga terms this viewpoint "objective internationalism" (p. 14).

War only strengthened internationalists' conviction: it revealed the limits of nationalism and underlined the necessity of international cooperation. Expectations for internationalism might decline at the outbreak of conflict, but in both World Wars I and II the awful destruction of modern military combat raised support for world government. This was especially evident in the mid-1940s, when a public opinion poll found 81 percent of Americans agreeing on the need to join a world organization (p. 79). Even noted "realist" E.H. Carr called for a "functional internationalism" (p. 82).

The UN, like the League, was nevertheless a creation of power politics. The effective veto held by the five permanent members of the Security Council makes the organization at its core a club of great powers.[5] Sluga recognizes the imperial manifestations of both organizations, but she stresses that they helped to create "internationality" by constituting an international public sphere in which new expectations of global politics were raised and new mechanisms underwent experimentation. Indeed, one reason that the League so disappointed its advocates was that its creation had itself generated belief in the power of international institutions to "solve" global and national problems. War, in other words, prompted the imagining of an international community.

Hierarchies of race and gender divided this imagined community, just as they did within the nation-state. Dominant discourses of civilization and empire crossed easily from the national to the international. Thus an ethos of liberal imperialism animated the League's Mandate System which was designed to form a "sacred trust of civilization" for colonized peoples.[6] In the 1950s, African UN delegates and officials found to their dismay that many New York establishments refused to serve them (p. 99). The League also tracked contemporary gender norms: less than 1 percent of its administrators were female (p. 67).

Nevertheless, Sluga finds that representatives of marginalized groups eagerly embraced internationalism. We meet figures like Blaise Diagne, the Senegalese delegate to the French Chamber of Deputies who helped convene a pan-African Congress in 1919; Dantès Bellegarde, the Haitian delegate to the League who aimed a public spotlight on colonial atrocities; and the American Emily Greene Balch, who along with Jane Addams and others pressed simultaneously for world peace and gender equality. African Americans W. E. B. DuBois and Ralph Bunche are recurring characters in this narrative. DuBois saw in international organizations a possible solution to the "problem of the color line." He organized a pan-African Congress in 1919 to pressure the drafters of the League to create an international organ to improve rights and treatment of colonized peoples, and appealed to Geneva throughout the 1920s and 30s, despite his disappointment with the flimsy oversight mechanisms of the League's Mandate system. When the framers of the UN again refused to press for decolonization, DuBois grew disillusioned—the UN's Trusteeship Program "disenfranchised 750 million persons living in colonies," in his estimation (p. 96). But Bunche, embracing what Sluga terms "a practical internationalism" (p. 111), served as head of the Trusteeship Program in order to push it to live up to its stated goals of enhancing the freedoms, rights, and economic development of the colonized world.

By the 1970s internationalism seemed more promising than ever for the Global South. As early as 1961, the so-called Afro-Asian states outnum-

bered the "white" ones (p. 132). Controlling the UN General Assembly, newly decolonized states championed national self-determination as a human right, condemned Israel's occupation of Palestine, pushed apartheid South Africa out of a series of international organizations, and proposed a "New International Economic Order" to redress economic injustice. Antiracism and anticolonialism stuck as global norms, but the global North still controlled the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and Security Council. And the United States reacted to the Third World's attempt to capture the agenda of the UN by delegitimizing internationalism. The U.S. had not used its veto power until 1970, but invoked it more than twenty times in the next ten years.[7] Uncomfortable with proclamations of nonwhite solidarity, Western academics increasingly identified race and ethnicity as troublesome dividers of humanity. Meanwhile, international relations theorists turned to realism, with its emphasis on the nation self-interest over international cooperation.

This is where histories of internationalism often diverge. Optimists see progress toward a rosier future just over the horizon despite past setbacks. Cynics see just more evidence of internationalism's inherent drawbacks: when international institutions challenged the status quo, the status quo fought back. But Sluga's analytical frame provides a third alternative: "Ultimately the history of internationalism travels along a characteristic narrative line from utopia to disillusionment, but no more than the tales that can be told of imagined national communities" (p. 152). In its acts of recovery and reorientation, ***Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*** thus makes an important contribution. Seeing internationalism as a series of projects rather than a unified teleology is a valuable intervention, for it helps historians to write the history of the international in a way that breaks through the stale debates over utopia and empire. The failure of certain internationalist projects can be treated as simply that: discrete failures. If internationalism is, like nationalism, a project on which interested parties can make claims, it frees us to write the history of the international without having to either praise or condemn internationalism per se.

The nationalist frame makes sense on a number of levels. For one, Sluga notes that the mechanics of building international identity have much in common with those that created national identities in the nineteenth century. Benedict Anderson famously explained the rise of nationalism through revolutions in communication technology that made it possible for inhabitants of a protonation to understand themselves as members of a common community, even though they would never meet face to face. As Anderson argued, reading newspapers and novels gave geographically widespread populations the feeling of sharing a similar temporal existence as they witnessed the unfolding of fictional or nonfiction narratives at the same time. This idea of "simultaneity" was also a feature of budding "internationality" in the early twentieth century. As John Hobson put it in 1906, "Everyone today … lives at the end of a telegraph line, which means … that all the great and significant happenings in the world are brought to his attention … at once and ***simultaneously*** to the attention of great masses of people, so that anything happening in the most remote part of the world makes its immediate impression upon the society of nations" (p. 155; italics Sluga's).

The national and the international were also interconnected through the metaphors of citizenship and progress. Just as subnational groups had joined gradually into larger and larger units to form the nation, the thinking went, so too must nations eventually amalgamate into a global whole. Indeed, the League of ***Nations*** was fundamentally an "internationalism of national memberships."[8] Its administrators envisioned the League as a summation of nationalities. As a legal advisor to the International Labor Organization put it: "the man or woman without roots in his own or any other country, even though a fair tech-

nician, will never make a satisfactory international official" (p. 61). While references to the undesirability of "cosmopolitans" and "persons without a country" had more than a whiff of the anti-Semitism of the "Wandering Jew" stereotype, this view also expressed a fundamental belief in the value of the nation as a stepping stone towards building international society. Only after World War II did internationalists embrace cosmopolitanism and the "world citizen."

The national/international parallel breaks down, however, when we come to the issue of power. Here Sluga is frustratingly vague; at times it feels as though one is reading the history of nationalism with the story of Otto von Bismarck's violent unification of Germany left out. The primary difference between nationalism and internationalism, after all, is that only the former has been yoked to a state with a monopoly of violence. Indeed, as Sluga acknowledges, nationality was often a product of the national state, rather than vice-versa. She cites the famous case of Italy where at unification in 1860 only a small minority of the population spoke "Italian" as a first language. Sluga takes this as proof that "once political institutions were created, the relevant respective forms of social consciousness would take hold" (p. 156). Internationalists hoped a parallel form of development might follow in the global arena. The flaw in this analogy lies in the nature of these political institutions. The Italian state could and did mobilize violence to incorporate areas that resisted identifying as Italian, rather than as, say, Calabrian or Sicilian, just as Washington mobilized violence to enforce a common "American" identity in the face of a challenge from Confederate nationalism in 1861.[9] International institutions have yet to marshal this kind of authority—and if one did we might be speaking of a universal empire rather than a world federation.

While Sluga develops the conceptual relationship between nationalism and internationalism, and traces their simultaneous development, we learn very little about the relationship between ***particular*** nations and the conditions of possibility for internationalism. The shape of the UN, for instance, is difficult to understand without a broader discussion of the relationship between the United States, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union.

One can't expect everything in an international history of less than two hundred pages; Sluga's wide reading in the secondary literature combined with research in archives in Geneva, New York, New Delhi, Stockholm, and Paris (among others) is more than enough. Indeed, the book's limits highlight a constant challenge for international histories of this type: how to maintain the delicate balance between breadth and depth. One effect of Sluga's admirably broad scope is that individuals emerge from the archives only briefly, for a paragraph or two, to illustrate a key point, before disappearing. So we learn about racism within the UN administration through the story of UN secretary-general Trygve Lie, who fired an African American employee after the parents of a young Norwegian employee complained that she was dating their son. U.S. ambassador Daniel Moynihan appears in the 1970s to declare that the UN had become a "theatre of the absurd" (p. 134). Swedish social scientist Alva Myrdal leaves UNESCO for a diplomatic posting, showing how hopes for international society devolved from the UN back to nation-states in the 1950s (p. 116). One wants to know more detail about how these individuals interacted with international institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and national states.

Of course, such a book would be a very different project, and certainly far more than 160 pages. The virtues of Sluga's concise treatment of twentieth-century internationalism deserve commendation on their own. Her book makes clear how broadly shared the vision of "internationality" was, and reveals the many political projects it supported. "[W]e have forgotten the long, inti-

mate, conceptual past shared by the national and international as entangled ways of thinking about modernity, progress, and politics," Sluga notes (p. 3). By calling on historians to analyze internationalism on its own terms, ***Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism*** demonstrates the maturation of international history and offers new foundations for future endeavors.

Notes

[1]. For a very small sampling, see Mark Mazower, ***Governing the World: The History of an Idea*** (New York: Penguin, 2012); Samuel Moyn, ***The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*** (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010); and Martti Koskenniemi, ***The Gentle Civilizer of Nations: The Rise and Fall of International Law, 1870-1960*** (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[2]. For a recent example, see Natasha Wheatley's H-DIPLO review of Daniel Gorman's ***The Emergence of International Society in the 1920s,*** https://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=37488.

[3]. See the Forum, "Liberal Empire and International Law," in ***The American Historical Review*** 117, no. 1 (2012): 67-148.

[4]. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Locksley Hall" (1835), http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/174629.

[5]. For a more explicit emphasis on power politics, specifically the connection to empire, see Mark Mazower, ***No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations*** (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009). See also David L. Bosco, ***Five to Rule them All: The UN Security Council and the Making of the Modern World*** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

[6]. League of Nations, "The Versailles Treaty," June 28, 1919, article 2, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/imt/parti.asp.

[7]. United Nations, "Security Council – Veto List," http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/resguide/scact_veto_en.shtml.

[8]. Gillaume Sacriste and Antoine Vauchez, "The Force of International Law: Lawyers' Diplomacy on the International Scene in the 1920s," ***Law & Social Inquiry*** 32, no. 1 (2007): 104.

[9]. Indeed, the creation of nationalism in the nineteenth century was in large part the product of state violence, as industrialized warfare proved vital to the centralization of nations from the United States to Germany to Japan. Thomas Bender, ***A Nation among Nations: America's Place in World History*** (New York: Hill & Wang, 2006), chap. 3.

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Citation: Benjamin Coates. Review of Sluga, Glenda. *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism.* H-Diplo, H-Net Reviews. June, 2014.

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