

## Introduction

---

The high contracting parties,  
In order to promote international co-operation and to achieve  
international peace and security  
by the acceptance of obligations not to resort to war,  
by the prescription of open, just and honourable relations between  
nations,  
by the firm establishment of the understandings of international law as  
the actual rule of conduct among Governments, and  
by the maintenance of justice and a scrupulous respect for all treaty  
obligations  
in the dealings of organised peoples with one another,  
Agree to this Covenant of the League of Nations.<sup>1</sup>

Thus begins the Covenant of the League of Nations of 1919. At the outset of the preamble, the Covenant stipulated the obligation of states not to resort to war as a means to preserve peace. For the first time, war – more precisely, initiating war – was in effect made illegal and the idea of collective security was institutionalised.<sup>2</sup> It was, historians have tended to suggest, achieved due to war-weariness, the horrors of the long, grinding war, great-power diplomacy or the personal project of the US President Woodrow Wilson.<sup>3</sup> While all these factors played important roles in

<sup>1</sup> *The Covenant of the League of Nations*, the Avalon Project, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th\\_century/leagcov.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/leagcov.asp).

<sup>2</sup> Martin Ceadel, 'Enforced Pacific Settlement or Guaranteed Mutual Defence? British and US Approaches to Collective Security in the Eclectic Covenant of the League of Nations', *The International History Review*, vol. 35, no. 5 (2013), pp. 993–1008.

<sup>3</sup> Henry R. Winkler, *The League of Nations Movement in Great Britain, 1914–1919* (Rutgers University Press, 1952); Peter J. Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace: The League of Nations in British Policy, 1914–1925* (Oxford University Press, 2009); George W. Egerton, *Great Britain and the Creation of the League of Nations: Strategy, Politics, and International Organization, 1914–1919* (Scolar Press, 1978); Tony Smith, *Why Wilson Matters: The Origin of American Liberal Internationalism and Its Crisis Today* (Princeton University Press, 2017); Thomas J. Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (Oxford University Press, 1992); Ross A. Kennedy (ed.), *A Companion to Woodrow Wilson* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013); Ross Kennedy, *The Will to Believe: Woodrow Wilson, World War I, and America's Strategy for Peace and Security* (Kent State University Press,

2 Introduction

founding the first international organisation for peace, this book reveals that the League originated intellectually from the little-appreciated pro-league movement in Britain and the unexpected development and consequences of its idea during the Great War.

In war-time Britain,<sup>4</sup> the development of the league of nations movement from a small circle of elite intellectuals to a mass movement was never smooth, straightforward or driven by purely utopian ideals. Because historians have largely neglected the contribution of this expanding movement to post-war peacemaking, two misunderstandings persist about the role of the movement. The first is that scholars have labelled it utopian. Historians and international relations theorists have tended to dismiss the leading pro-league thinkers as starry-eyed idealists.<sup>5</sup> This book challenges that received wisdom by tracing the ideas of the leading members of the pro-league movement, especially those of the Bryce Group, one of the first pro-league circles in Britain, and its successor, the League of Nations Society, up to the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. This analysis offers a fresh assessment of liberal internationalism in the early twentieth century – the intellectual foundation of the pro-league movement in Britain and the League of Nations, which defied such clear-cut categories as utopian or realist. To reveal the neglected evolution of ideas during the war, this book mainly examines the thinkers who invented the post-war idea and initiated the movement in 1914.<sup>6</sup>

The second misunderstanding is that the movement promoted a purely peaceful ideal and thereby succeeded in receiving the support of the war-weary public at the end of the war.<sup>7</sup> In the actual course of developing the pro-league movement, the more popular and influential

2009); Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Wilsonian Statecraft: Theory and Practice of Liberal Internationalism during World War I* (Scholarly Resources Books, 1991).

<sup>4</sup> In this book, ‘the Great War’, ‘the war’ and ‘war time’ refer to the First World War.

<sup>5</sup> E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919–1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (Macmillan, 2001), pp. 97–98; Martin Ceadel, *Thinking about Peace and War* (Oxford University Press, 1987); Paul Laity, *The British Peace Movement, 1870–1914* (Oxford University Press, 2001), introduction and chapter 8; Helen McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations: Democracy, Citizenship and Internationalism, c. 1918–45* (Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 135.

<sup>6</sup> Hence, the book focuses on intellectual leaders of the pro-league movement who were mostly highly educated, liberal internationalists such as Cambridge classicist Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, Liberal MP Willoughby Dickinson and renowned international lawyer James Bryce, rather than those who became associated with the league project later in the war including Liberal MP David Davies, Conservative MP Robert Cecil or political scientist Alfred Zimmern.

<sup>7</sup> For example, Yearwood has indicated that in Britain ‘liberals, conservatives, and socialists had united in the war effort’ and ‘wanted guarantees of an enduring peace’. See, Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace*, p. 364.

it became, the less control the original leadership enjoyed over its direction. In popularising their ideas for mass consumption, the pro-leaguers' original proposal about a post-war organisation lost its nuance and sophistication. Previous works have missed this crucial process of change. The story of the League cannot be understood without recognising the remarkable extent to which the movement transformed its official thinking about a league into something different and unforeseen because of the pressures of public opinion and war-time politics. At the outbreak of the war in 1914, pro-league thinkers identified the divisive international politics of anarchy, the balance of power and rival alliance blocs as the primary causes of war.<sup>8</sup> The goal of founding a league of nations was therefore to reform international relations by introducing a new and cooperative international institution *inclusive* of all the great powers. Yet, by the end of the war in 1918, the pro-league leaders came to promote what they had originally opposed: the league as a *continuation* of the war-time alliance against Germany and its allies into the post-war peace.<sup>9</sup> The key driver behind this shift in 1917–1918 was the successful 'self-mobilisation' of civil society, which, as John Horne has argued, reinforced the argument to fight until Germany fell and the widely shared belief that the league should be formed as a coalition of democratic states.<sup>10</sup> This book examines why and how this shift unfolded by exploring how post-war ideas were elaborated inside the movement and promoted in public and thereby reassesses the ideas as well as the evolution of the pro-league movement in Britain from 1914 to 1919 – a crucial period that framed the power and limitations of the League of Nations.

The shift of the league of nations idea to a continuation of the war-time alliance will also show the little-debated background of the Paris Peace Conference that eventually determined the formation of the League of Nations. Despite the fact that John Maynard Keynes, the economist and a British delegate at Versailles, famously criticised the reparation clauses as unjustified and unworkable,<sup>11</sup> the Peace Settlement imposed harsh

<sup>8</sup> The pro-league thinkers also discussed some of the other causes of war, for example, secret diplomacy, the arms industry and lack of democratic control of foreign policy, but this book examines the thinkers' main foci, the balance of power and rival alliance blocs, as the key to reforming the international system for future war prevention.

<sup>9</sup> As Chapter 5 will show, the league as a continuation of the war-time alliance against Germany was not unanimously upheld by all the pro-league activists. Yet, as this book will demonstrate, as one united movement for the creation of a new organisation, the pro-league movement promoted exclusivity at the end of the war.

<sup>10</sup> John Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 195, 198, 209–11.

<sup>11</sup> Zara Steiner, *The Lights That Failed: European International History, 1919–1933* (Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 63–66; John Maynard Keynes, *The Collected Writings of John*

## 4 Introduction

and antagonistic terms on Germany. While most of the literature focuses on the diplomacy of peacemaking among the Big Four victors and the question of reparations, the punitive nature of the peace arose from more than just flawed negotiations or poor leadership. As reflected in the peacemaking, there were great domestic demands, at least in Britain, for punishing the enemy country severely and excluding it from a new world order. The prevailing hostile attitude towards Germany – one crucial factor that shaped what historians have evaluated as the defective treaty – was mirrored in the pro-league movement and then at the Peace Conference. Analysis of non-governmental actors, such as the public and popular movements, in addition to high-level policy-making and diplomacy, will yield profound insights into how such actors influenced decision-making and international relations.

In this book, I employ the lower case ‘a league of nations’ to refer to the ideas and movement for such an organisation during the First World War. For the international organisation set up in 1920 in Geneva, I use the customary capitalised ‘League of Nations’. This distinction speaks directly to one of the core themes of this book – the distinction between the foundational ideas of a league and the fate of those ideas in war-time domestic politics and post-war international politics.

Historical interest in the League of Nations has recently revived and expanded to study a whole range of international and transnational themes,<sup>12</sup> in particular, the economic and social spheres of the League’s development.<sup>13</sup> While the establishment of the League paved new ways of conceiving the legality and the legitimacy of war in the

*Maynard Keynes, Volume 2, The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920–1946* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Susan Pedersen, *The Guardians: The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford University Press, 2015); Stephen Wertheim, ‘The League of Nations: A Retreat from International Law?’, *Journal of Global History*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2012), pp. 210–32; Elisabetta Tollardo, *Fascist Italy and the League of Nations, 1922–1935* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Simon Jackson and Alanna O’Malley (eds.), *The Institution of International Order: From the League of Nations to the United Nations* (Routledge, 2018).

<sup>13</sup> Susan Pedersen, ‘Back to the League of Nations: Review Essay’, *The American Historical Review*, vol. 112, no. 4 (October 2007), pp. 1091–117; Patricia Clavin and Jens-Wilhelm Wessels, ‘Transnationalism and the League of Nations: Understanding the Work of Its Economic and Financial Organization’, *Contemporary European History* (2005), pp. 465–92; Daniel Laqua (ed.), *Internationalism Reconfigured: Transnational Ideas and Movements between the World Wars* (Tauris Academic Studies, 2011); Daniel Gorman, *International Cooperation in the Early Twentieth Century* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2017); Karen Gram-Skjoldager and Haakon A. Ikonomou, ‘The Construction of the League of Nations Secretariat: Formative Practices of Autonomy and Legitimacy in International Organizations’, *The International History Review*, vol. 41, no. 2 (2019), pp. 257–79.

international system, scholarly attention has tended to be deflected away from the organisation's central founding purpose: the prevention of war.<sup>14</sup> Most studies have focused on the period *after* the Paris Peace Conference of 1919–1920 and only explored the question of how the League was planned for the maintenance of peace from certain angles, especially the diplomacy between the victorious great powers.

When scrutinising the establishment of the first international organisation, it is not surprising that the first strand of scholarship focused on high politics and diplomacy. How the politicians of Britain and the United States negotiated the creation of the League during and after the war, for example, has been thoroughly investigated by Peter Yearwood and George Egerton.<sup>15</sup> These rich and detailed accounts have helped us understand the League as a product of political manipulation, since it was undoubtedly politicians who had the ultimate power to decide what the League would be like in reality.<sup>16</sup> According to Yearwood, the establishment of the League was predominantly 'a product of British war-time diplomacy'. The formation of the idea and the institution were 'part of, not apart from, British policy'.<sup>17</sup> His work therefore mostly underestimates how pro-league groups constructed and popularised the idea of a league before it became a central subject in the negotiation of the peace settlement. Yet, in international relations, as Akira Iriye has argued, the issue of peace and world order are very frequently closely related to popular movements, interests, values and

<sup>14</sup> Many studies on war prevention in international society of the early twentieth century have focused on the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1928. See Oona A. Hathaway and Scott J. Shapiro, *The Internationalists: How a Radical Plan to Outlaw War Remade the World* (Simon & Schuster, 2017); Oona A. Hathaway and Scott J. Shapiro, 'International Law and Its Transformation through the Outlawry of War', *International Affairs*, vol. 95, no. 1 (January 2019), pp. 45–62; Robert H. Ferrell, *Peace in Their Time: The Origins of the Kellogg-Briand Pact* (Yale University Press, 1952); John E. Stoner, *S. O. Levinson and the Pact of Paris: A Study in Techniques of Influence* (University of Chicago Press, 1943); Harriet Hyman Alonso, *The Women's Peace Union and the Outlawry of War, 1921–1942* (University of Tennessee Press, 1989).

<sup>15</sup> Both Yearwood's and Egerton's work have also given much more weight to the inter-war period rather than war time. See, Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace*; Egerton, *Great Britain and the Creation of the League of Nations*.

<sup>16</sup> While concentrating on British high politics and diplomacy, Egerton's book has demonstrated awareness of the relation between the pro-league movement and high politics. For example, the book has indicated that 'it is necessary to place British debate on the league question in its broader social and strategic context. Not only did the League of Nations movement see the realisation of its immediate goal in the creation of the league at the Paris peace conference, but the ideas of war-time dissenters and proleaguers had a powerful impact on the political attitudes and values of postwar British society'. See Egerton, *Great Britain and the Creation of the League of Nations*, p. xiii.

<sup>17</sup> Yearwood, *Guarantee of Peace*, pp. 4.

## 6 Introduction

norms as well as power politics.<sup>18</sup> While it is true that politicians eventually decided to build the League, it was the league of nations movement led by the Bryce Group and the League of Nations Society, rather than politicians, that devised the post-war plan for a new order, obtained popular support for it and pushed the league onto the political agenda in Britain and the United States. Interactions with other actors should also be included, given that the movement not only involved some politicians as leading members but also loosely kept some politicians as supporters of the idea. For instance, Willoughby Dickinson, the Liberal MP, was one of the founding members of the pro-league groups; renowned politicians such as Robert Cecil and Edward Grey favoured a broadly defined post-war organisation from the early years of the war.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, the Phillimore Committee, the Foreign Office's official study group on the creation of a league of nations, examined the plans by the pro-league groups and reflected them in its official reports of 1918, which provided the basis for the discussion on the League of Nations Covenant at the Paris Peace Conference.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the analysis of policy-making alone cannot reveal the whole picture of how the idea of the post-war organisation developed during the war and in what ways this development contributed to the resulting League of Nations.

In studies of popular movements in Britain, the main attention of historians has been devoted to the Union of Democratic Control, the most well-known radical group active during the war.<sup>21</sup> The Union, which called for an end to secret diplomacy as well as for the democratic control of foreign policy by Parliament,<sup>22</sup> has aroused scholarly interest due to its primarily political ambitions. Led by politically active journalist E. D. Morel and Labour MP Ramsay MacDonald, the Union of Democratic Control was not only a part of what A. J. P. Taylor has described as the 'trouble makers' of foreign policy dissenters but was also

<sup>18</sup> Akira Iriye, *War and Peace in the Twentieth Century* (Tokyo University Press, 2009) [in Japanese], chapter 1; Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (Columbia University Press, 2002), p. xxxiii.

<sup>19</sup> See Chapter 5.

<sup>20</sup> Winkler, *The League of Nations Movement*, p. 57; TNA: CAB29/1, The Committee on the League of Nations, Interim Report, 20 March 1918 and Final Report, 3 July 1918.

<sup>21</sup> Marvin Swartz, *The Union of Democratic Control in British Politics during the First World War* (Clarendon Press, 1971). Also see Stuart Wallace, *War and the Image of Germany: British Academics 1914–1918* (Donald, 1988); A. J. P. Taylor, *The Trouble Makers: Dissent over Foreign Policy, 1792–1939* (H. Hamilton, 1957); Sally Harris, *Out of Control: British Foreign Policy and the Union of Democratic Control, 1914–1918* (University of Hull Press, 1996); Jan Stöckmann, 'The First World War and the Democratic Control of Foreign Policy', *Past & Present* (forthcoming).

<sup>22</sup> Wallace, *War and the Image of Germany*, p. 90; Swartz, *The Union of Democratic Control in British Politics*, p. 25.



firmly set against the Liberal cabinet at the point of the group's foundation in 1914.<sup>23</sup> The League of Nations Union, the largest pro-league group in Britain, formed in 1918 as a consequence of the amalgamation of two pro-league groups, the League of Nations Society and the League of Free Nations Association, has been examined by Donald S. Birn and Helen McCarthy. Both authors, however, focus on the Union's main activities in the inter-war period rather than its emergence during the First World War.<sup>24</sup> Although some scholars, such as Henry R. Winkler and Keith Robbins, have studied the war-time league movement, they have tended to overlook how the movement interacted with domestic and international politics.<sup>25</sup> Such interactions were, in fact, pivotal to the building of ideas about a post-war organisation and the public attitudes towards it. In a transnational context, the pro-league movement as a network of several countries' intellectuals and activists has been analysed by Carl Bouchard, Stephen Wertheim and Warren Kuehl.<sup>26</sup> Although these works have suggested the importance of the transnational dimension, we still know little about how and to what extent pro-league activists and their post-war plans influenced those beyond borders and led to collaboration with others. As Chapter 4 will show, exploring such aspects of the pro-league movement will illuminate how ideas and ideals simultaneously provided inspiration and generated friction across boundaries.

The founding thinkers behind the league have frequently been dismissed by scholars as 'utopian' or 'pacifist' – in other words, ivory-tower thinkers who had no sense of how politics worked in reality. This assertion, that pro-league thinkers were detached from political realism, in part explains why the role of the movement has been long discounted.<sup>27</sup> As Martin Ceadel has noted, however, such conceptual categories are

<sup>23</sup> Taylor, *The Trouble Makers*.

<sup>24</sup> Donald S. Birn, *The League of Nations Union, 1918–1945* (Oxford University Press, 1981); McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations*; Helen McCarthy, 'The League of Nations, Public Ritual and National Identity in Britain, c. 1919–1956', *Historical Workshop Journal* (2010), pp. 108–32.

<sup>25</sup> Winkler, *The League of Nations Movement*; Keith Robbins, *The Abolition of War: The 'Peace Movement' in Britain, 1914–1919* (University of Wales Press, 1976).

<sup>26</sup> Carl Bouchard, *Le Citoyen et L'ordre Mondial (1914–1919). Le Rêve D'une Paix Durable au Lendemain de la Grande Guerre (France, Grande-Bretagne, États-Unis)* (Pédone, 2008); Warren Kuehl, *Seeking World Order: The United States and International Organization to 1920* (Vanderbilt University Press, 1969). The American pro-league of nations movement has been studied by Ruhl Bartlett, *The League to Enforce Peace* (University of North Carolina Press, 1944); Wertheim, 'The League of Nations: A Retreat from International Law?', *Journal of Global History*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2012), pp. 210–32.

<sup>27</sup> Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, pp. 97–98; Ceadel, *Thinking about Peace and War*; Laity, *The British Peace Movement*, introduction and chapter 8; McCarthy, *The British People and the League of Nations*, p. 135.

8 Introduction

ideal types and do not capture the complexity and dilemmas that thinking about international politics must confront.<sup>28</sup> Political theorists, such as Lucian Ashworth and Peter Wilson, in their work on the inter-war years have also argued that those who were labelled realists or idealists held a variety of perspectives and opinions that ranged across the very conceptual divide.<sup>29</sup> As we shall see in Chapter 2, even concepts that appear to be opposing – realism and idealism – are inseparably entwined in the pro-leagueurs' post-war plan for preventing war.<sup>30</sup> Hence, rather than avoiding these categories, this book employs them to understand inconsistencies and the fragile balance incorporated in the ideas about the post-war order. To appreciate how idealism and realism are common core concepts rather than opposing ideas, it is important to study not only what the pro-league thinkers published – something most international relations scholars do – but also their private discussions and correspondence.<sup>31</sup> Building on a study of this private conversation among the leading league activists, this book investigates the ambiguity and ambivalence in early twentieth century thought about international order and particularly the prevention of war. Such ambiguity and ambivalence, as this book will suggest, are inherently part of the original thinking that continues to shape the way in which we think about international politics to this very day.

Even though the pro-league of nations movement has usually been categorised as a peace movement,<sup>32</sup> most of the pro-league activists were

<sup>28</sup> Ceadel, *Thinking about Peace and War*, p. 19. Also see Martin Ceadel, *Pacifism in Britain, 1914–1945: The Defining of a Faith* (Oxford University Press, 1980); Martin Ceadel, *Semi-Detached Idealists: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1854–1945* (Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> L. M. Ashworth, 'Did the Realist-Idealist Great Debate Really Happen? A Revisionist History of International Relations', *International Relations*, vol. 16, no. 1 (2002), pp. 33–51; L. M. Ashworth, 'Where Are the Idealists in Inter-War International Relations?', *Review of International Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2006), pp. 291–308. A similar argument can be found in Jeremy Weiss, 'E. H. Carr, Norman Angell, and Reassessing the Realist-Utopian Debate', *The International History Review*, 2013, vol. 35, no. 5, pp. 1156–84; Peter Wilson, *The International Theory of Leonard Woolf: A Study in Twentieth Century Idealism* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); David Long and Peter Wilson (eds.), *Thinkers of the Twenty Years' Crisis: Inter-War Idealism Reassessed* (Clarendon Press, 1995); John Bew, *Realpolitik: A History* (Oxford University Press, 2016); Peter Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power: France and the Politics of National Security in the Era of the First World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 520–21.

<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 2. Also see Sluga's analysis of 'the national and international' in Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), p. 150.

<sup>31</sup> For instance, Wilson, *The International Theory of Leonard Woolf*; Long and Wilson (eds.), *Thinkers of The Twenty Years' Crisis*.

<sup>32</sup> Robbins, *The Abolition of War*; Winkler, *The League of Nations Movement*.



neither pacifists nor opposed to war in all circumstances.<sup>33</sup> Since it aimed to devise a new system to prevent future wars, the pro-league movement should be better understood as a movement for international reform. In Paul Schroeder's term, the evolution of the pro-league movement embodied the 'emergence of the new order'.<sup>34</sup> Yet, as he has indicated, this emergence depended on a widespread, collective recognition of the need for it.<sup>35</sup> As this book will illustrate, this recognition was initially shared only among the pro-league activists and a few political figures. By the end of the war, this idea had become sufficiently widespread to bring about a new international order; but in so doing, it took the post-war plan out of the original pro-leaguers' hands.

A larger transition in international politics was also highlighted by the shift of the pro-league movement's idea into a league that excluded enemy countries – from the diplomacy of the Concert of European Great Powers in the nineteenth century to the ideological, polarised international politics of the years between the two World Wars and of the Cold War in the twentieth century.<sup>36</sup> A stable order and universal peace were rarely sought beyond European politics. This was true from the nineteenth century to the beginning of the Great War and was grounded in the politics of the balance of power and the notion that war was 'the continuation of politics by other means'.<sup>37</sup> From the First World War onwards, as Woodrow Wilson and Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin called for 'new diplomacy',<sup>38</sup> a world peace constructed upon an ideological framework began to be a central concept in the discussion of

<sup>33</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>34</sup> Paul W. Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 249, 258. This book also aims to show how a new international order after the Great War was already laid down before the 'after victory'. See G. John Ikenberry, *After Victory: Institutions, Strategic Restraint, and the Rebuilding of Order after Major Wars* (Princeton University Press, 2019), pp. 4, 7.

<sup>35</sup> Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft*, pp. 249, 258.

<sup>36</sup> For the Concert of Europe of the nineteenth century, see Paul W. Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics, 1763–1848* (Clarendon Press, 1996); Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft*. For the shift to ideological polarity in the twentieth century, see Alan Cassels, *Ideology and International Relations in the Modern World* (Routledge, 1996), pp. 139–56; Mark Mazower, 'Violence and the State in the Twentieth Century', *The American Historical Review*, vol. 107, no. 4 (October 2002), pp. 1158–78. For the shift of international politics from the nineteenth century to the outbreak of the Great War, also see Cohrs, *The Unfinished Peace after World War I*, p. 26.

<sup>37</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Start Pub. LLC, 2013); F. H. Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace: Theory and Practice in the History of Relations between States* (Cambridge University Press, 1967), chapter 14; Michael Eliot Howard, *War and the Liberal Conscience* (Oxford University Press, 1981).

<sup>38</sup> Alan Sharp, 'The New Diplomacy and the New Europe, 1916–1922', in Nicholas Doumanis (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of European History, 1914–1945* (Oxford University Press, 2016); Robert W. Tucker, 'Woodrow Wilson's "New Diplomacy"',

10 Introduction

international affairs.<sup>39</sup> Whilst military force remained a vital tool of international politics, how that force would be employed would, as the book demonstrates, never be the same again.<sup>40</sup>

The Great War, producing as it did changes in so many spheres,<sup>41</sup> also left a legacy of what David Stevenson has described as a ‘deeper transformation of western attitudes towards armed conflict’<sup>42</sup> – in other words, values about the legitimacy of war. Contrary to the accepted narrative,<sup>43</sup> the long, horrible experience of the Great War neither transformed the public attitude into opposition to war in and of itself nor accelerated the development of the pro-league movement. Instead, this book suggests that the experience of the war led not to opposition of war itself but to the conviction that legitimate reasons must be provided for going to war in the future. Before 1914, the reasons for going to war could be varied – conquest, defence and sometimes honour. Fuelled by jingoism and war’s image as something short, heroic and rewarding, the public was not particularly inclined to consider whether there were ‘righteous’ reasons for waging war.<sup>44</sup> As this book illustrates in the case of Britain, but the point is applicable elsewhere too, the experience of the First World War elevated the preservation of peace as the most legitimate moral and ideological reasons for war.<sup>45</sup>

This book investigates the overlooked history of the intellectual origins of the league as an idea and political goal in Britain. The study of intellectuals and their role in ‘the production and circulation’ of values and ideas are vital in the study of the Great War and international relations.<sup>46</sup> It was because the war was ‘a battle of ideas’ from the outset and mobilised intellectuals on an unprecedented scale<sup>47</sup> that their interactions with politicians and the public beyond their borders influenced

*World Policy Journal*, vol. 21, no. 2 (Summer, 2004), pp. 92–107; Arno J. Mayer, *Wilson vs. Lenin: Political Origins of the New Diplomacy 1917–1918* (Meridian Books, 1969).

<sup>39</sup> Iriye, *War and Peace in the Twentieth Century*, pp. 60–61; William Mulligan, *The Great War for Peace* (Yale University Press, 2014), pp. 376–77.

<sup>40</sup> Kosaka, *International Politics*, pp. 8–10.

<sup>41</sup> Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, vol. 2 (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Mulligan, *The Great War for Peace*, pp. 10, 375; Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power*, p. 207.

<sup>42</sup> D. Stevenson, *Cataclysm: The First World War As Political Tragedy* (Basic Books, 2004), p. 244; Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power*, p. 207.

<sup>43</sup> For example, Bouchard, *Le Citoyen et L'ordre Mondial*, p. 16.

<sup>44</sup> I. F. Clarke, *Voices Prophesying War, 1763–1984* (Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 131, 162.

<sup>45</sup> Cecelia Lynch, *Beyond Appeasement: Interpreting Interwar Peace Movements in World Politics* (Cornell University Press, 1999), pp. 61–62.

<sup>46</sup> John Horne, ‘End of a Paradigm? The Cultural History of the Great War’, *Past & Present*, vol. 242, no. 1 (February 2019), pp. 158.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 169.