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The Rockefeller Foundation and the Transition from the League of Nations to the UN (1939–1946)

The transformation of the international system that took place between 1939 and 1945 has been well documented from a military-diplomatic perspective: the Second World War confirmed the status of the United States as a superpower, not only as a result of the decisive economic and military contribution it made to the conflict, but also through the central role it played in the reorganisation of the post-war world, especially through the creation of a host of international organisations active in a wide variety of fields. Until recently, however, historians have only been interested in the most visible part of this process, namely intergovernmental negotiations and the major conferences, most famously the San Francisco Conference. Precisely what happened on an infra-governmental level remains little known, particularly when it comes to the question of how private American actors contributed to this process of reorganisation. One such case shall be examined here: the activities of the Rockefeller Foundation (RF). Its wartime activities followed a pattern that has also been highlighted in recent historiography on the League of Nations (LoN), revealing a clear continuity between the pre-1939 and post-1945 international systems. This case study allows us, moreover, to revise the commonly held view that the United States had been absent from the international system before 1939 and only entered the system after 1945, changing it radically. While the American government never had a clear political strategy with regard to the LoN, the large philanthropic foundations, principally the RF, gave constant support to the League. In particular, the RF engaged in a form of intellectual diplomacy during the interwar period, as evidenced in its cooperation with the technical sections of the LoN. Its aim was to create a global government of experts capable of solving the problems posed by the First World War and the crisis of 1929. While this diplomacy was presented as being wholly apolitical, it nevertheless had a clear objective that it held in common with American internationalist circles: to involve the United States in the LoN system to the maximum degree possible.[1] Once the war had begun, the RF continued its

1 On the complex relationship between large-scale philanthropy and the American government, see L. Tournès (ed.), *L'argent de l'influence. Les fondations américaines et leurs réseaux européens*, Paris 2010, 5–23.

activity along these lines and became involved *de facto* in matters relating to the changing structure of the LoN system and the development of the UN system. This article will argue that the RF played an important role in the wartime transition from one system to another through its collaboration with two principal international organisations. The first of these was the Economic, Financial and Transit Department (EFTD) of the LoN, which had been accumulating considerable expertise in economic affairs since the interwar period. By financing its move to the United States and all of its work during the Second World War, the RF would allow it to make a major intellectual contribution to the reorganisation of the global economic order after 1945. The second major contribution of the RF was its participation in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA). This organisation was a crucial agent in the transition from the LoN system to the UN, of which it was the earliest organisation. The RF provided UNRRA not only with staff but also with a considerable number of working methods, particularly relating to questions of health, as well as with a network of contacts around the world. The Foundation thus found itself heavily involved in the process of transforming the LoN system to that of the UN. It was not merely a private organisation involved in this field; it was itself an actor in the redefinition of the overall structure of the system of international organisations during the Second World War. Its role in this process was threefold: it provided financial backing, carried forward the legacy of the LoN into the UN system and supplied expertise and a set of working practices on the ground that would serve as operating models for international organisations after 1945, notably for the World Health Organisation.

1. The Installation of the League of Nations in the United States

The Rockefeller Foundation and the Bruce Reform

One of the most visible actions of the RF in the redefinition of the system of international organisations was its support for the relocation of the LoN to the United States and for the League's wartime activities. This process was a direct consequence of the Bruce Reform.[2] Beginning in September 1938, this process sought to make technical activities the core of the work of the League in order to encourage the participation of non-member states, especially the United States. From the late 1920s, the American government gradually came closer to the LoN through the participation of federal employees on various technical commissions, but it remained fundamentally reticent about any official rapprochement with the League because of opposition in Congress and unfavourable public opinion. The large American foun-

2 For a detailed description of the process see V.-Y. Ghébali, *La Société des Nations et la réforme Bruce, 1939–1940*, Geneva, 1970; see also M. Dubin, «Toward the Bruce Report: The Economic and Social Programs of the League of Nations in the Avenol Era», in: *The League of Nations in Retrospect*, Berlin, New York 1983, 42–65; and P. Clavin, *Securing the World Economy. The Reinvention of the League of Nations 1920–1946*, Oxford 2013, 231–251.

dations, meanwhile, participated in the LoN from the start: such was the case of the RF, which financed the Health Organisation (HO) from 1922 onwards and then, from the early 1930s, the Economic and Financial Organisation (EFO) and the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation (IIIC). This financial support extended to the whole of the League's activities: it supported the main technical sections (covering as much as 40 per cent of their budget, depending on the year) as well contributing to the implementation of their projects.[3] The general aim of the foundation was to promote technical activities and to make the technical sections more autonomous vis-à-vis the central institutions of the League, in order to ensure that various parts of the American federal administration (notably the Public Health Service, Department of Labor and Department of Commerce) could participate without any risk of interfering in the political activities of the League. The implementation of the Bruce Reform by the LoN institutions provided the American government with the opportunity to participate more fully in its technical activities, some of which it had a particular interest in, notably those of the Economic and Financial Organisation that worked on international economic reform questions. While the American government showed support for the logic of the Bruce reforms, it could not advertise its support for the process too overtly in case it provoked opposition in Congress. Instead, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Cordell Hull would allow the RF to act in this area.

The Foundation was kept informed of the Bruce Reform process from the start: it had many long-established contacts inside the LoN, going back to the time when Raymond Fosdick (President of the RF since 1936) was the League's undersecretary general. The Rockefeller officers were in regular contact with the heads of the HO (notably Ludwig Rajchman), the EFO (particularly Alexander Loveday) and the IIIC (notably its director Henri Bonnet), as well as with networks of experts sitting on the various commissions of the technical sections. To say the least, the internal workings of the organisation kept no secrets for them. Among the members of the League's apparatus who played an intermediary role between the League and the world of American philanthropy as well as the American government, Arthur Sweetser is incontestably the most important. A war correspondent in Europe from 1914 to 1918, he worked in the press section of the American delegation during the Peace Conference, and subsequently became a member of the team that set up the Information Section[4] designed to publicise the activities of the LoN; he became its director in 1933 and remained a member until the Second World War. All the files involving the United States came across his desk, making him a key intermediary

3 L. Tournès, «La philanthropie américaine, La Société des Nations et la coproduction d'un ordre international (1919–1946)», in: *Relations internationales* 151 (2012), 25–36.

4 Sweetser to Drummond, 1929, Arthur Sweetser file, SDN/S889.

«not only between the secretariat and America but between the League of Nations and the United States».[5] The RF, the American Consulate, the LoN Non-Partisan Association (which opened an office in Geneva in 1929) and many others approached him as an intermediary when establishing contacts, requesting information or proposing services. He undoubtedly spent much time trying to strengthen ties with the United States by disseminating information about the work of the League. He was also a member of the League of Nations Non-Partisan Association, of which Raymond Fosdick was one of the founders in 1922, and which gathered together a large section of the American internationalist milieu.

As soon as the main outline of the Bruce Reform began to circulate around the LoN institutions at the end of September 1938, Sweetser communicated its contents to Fosdick.[6] In February 1940, when the Secretariat of the League envisaged setting up by June the Central Committee on Economic and Social Questions foreseen by the reform, the United States was officially invited to join, but Roosevelt refused owing to the proximity of the presidential elections. At exactly the same time, Raymond Fosdick wrote to Sweetser that the Foundation was ready to finance the committee,[7] which the League was incapable of doing given its financial state. The weeks that followed were marked by numerous discussions between the officers of the RF and the Secretariat of the League, as well as meetings with Alexander Loveday, the director of the Economic Intelligence Service. The Secretary General of the League, Joseph Avenol, was hardly in favour of setting up a central committee, autonomous vis-à-vis the League's political activities, which would weaken the authority of the Secretariat. Loveday, meanwhile, spoke out in favour of such autonomy,[8] and the RF, long since in favour of this solution, offered him its indirect support through financial backing. In March, a key step was taken towards the creation of a new body when Economic Intelligence Service was integrated into a new Economic, Financial and Transit Department (EFTD) placed under the direction of Loveday. The latter, as agreed with the officers of the Rockefeller, immediately lodged an official demand for financial support to undertake a programme of research on post-war problems. Though he requested 18.000 dollars, already a significant sum, the trustees, convinced of the necessity of an organisation dealing with transnational socio-economic questions and determined to ensure its success, offered him 100.000 and were even willing to increase this sum once the organisation had been set up.[9] This gesture was exceptional in the history of the Foundation, not because of the sum offered but because of the fact that it was five times higher than the sum requested by the applicant.

5 Pierre Comert (Director of the Information Section) on Sweetser, 30 November 1923, Arthur Sweetser file, SDN/S889.

6 Sweetser to Fosdick, 19 October 1938, RF 2–1938/100/154/1136.

7 Fosdick to Sweetser, 28 February 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/153.

8 Clavin, *Securing the World Economy*, 245–246.

9 RF Minutes, 3 April 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/148. Kittredge to Willits, 16 April 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/153.

The Relocation of the Economic, Financial and Transit Department

Circumstances would play havoc with the ongoing process of relocating the EFTD and at the same time accelerate the break-up of the LoN system, part of which finding its way across the Atlantic. In April 1940, the invasion of Western Europe put the creation of the Central Committee on hold indefinitely and raised the broader question of whether the LoN could survive in a Europe dominated by Hitler, who had made no secret of his hatred for the League. In May, Arthur Sweetser left Geneva for the United States in order to undertake a series of meetings with academics, representatives of foundations and State Department officials to discuss the possibility of transferring the League across the Atlantic. The RF played an important role in this process, not only from a financial point of view but also by mobilising its networks.

At the beginning of June 1940, Sweetser met the president of Princeton University, Harold Dodds, also a member of the Board of Trustees of the RF, the director of the Institute of Advanced Study (IAS) Frank Aydelotte, and Carl Tenbroeck, the director of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, which was partly based in Princeton. The IAS seemed to be the ideal location for hosting the League: created in 1930 thanks to a donation by the industrialist and philanthropist Louis Bamberger, it had also been financed from the start by foundations including the RF, the Carnegie Institution of Washington, the Commonwealth Fund, and the Julius Rosenwald fund.[10] After having first been directed by Abraham Flexner, one of the most influential representatives of Rockefeller philanthropy, it was placed under the guidance of Aydelotte in 1939. In the spring of 1940, the institute also received a large grant from the RF to undertake a study on international financial questions. The arrival of the League, and of the EFTD in particular, represented the continuation of a strategy by the RF to strengthen the institute's competence in this field.

During these meetings, Sweetser also met Secretary of State Cordell Hull, who informed him that, while it was politically impossible to host the whole of the LoN in the United States, the invitation of its technical sections could be envisaged: the research of the EFTD was of particular interest to the Department of State,[11] which had long been in favour of a thorough overhaul of the rules governing the international economy and, especially, of liberalising international trade. Hull added that an official invitation from the federal government would be out of the question as it would require a risky vote by Congress,[12] but he gave the green light to an invitation of the EFTD by private institutions. Thus, on 12 June, Secretary General Joseph Avenol received a letter from Dodds, Aydelotte and Tenbroeck inviting the technical

10 *Bulletin of the IAS*, 10, October 1941, 11. Available on: http://library.ias.edu/files/pdfs/bulletins.

11 Extract from the Report of the Director to the Trustees of the Institute of Advanced Study, 14 October 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/154.

12 Memorandum of the English Consul at Geneva, 21 June 1940; Cordell Hull to the American Consul at Geneva, 29 June 1940, LON/C1624.

sections to set themselves up in Princeton «for such period as may prove to be advisable»[13] in order to continue their work on the university campus. For this purpose, the Institute put some of its offices at their disposal. At first Avenol turned this offer down, but the collapse of the French army (which called for an armistice on 17 June) and pressure from the British obliged him to change his mind and accept the invitation at the end of July.[14] In the meantime, Loveday, also in permanent contact with the RF, obtained the Foundation's assurance that it would cover the cost of the installation and upkeep of his team in the United States, evaluated at 60.000 dollars a year.[15] The Foundation also financed the urgent microfilming of the documentation on economic questions accumulated by the OEF since its establishment. The final problem to be solved was the question of transport: in July 1940 travelling between Europe and the United States was difficult and finding 23 tickets for the members of the Department and their families was a complicated task. Sweetser and his colleagues solved the problem by personally contacting the companies American Export Lines and Pan-American Clippers in order to give priority to their protégés, who set off from Lisbon in several waves over the course of the summer. By the beginning of September, the whole team was working in the Princeton campus. Between 1940 and 1946 all of its operating costs (260.000 dollars) would be covered by the RF, which allowed it, once the vagaries of the move had been overcome, to work in better conditions than in Geneva.[16]

The arrival of the EFTD in Princeton as well as symbolising the rising power of America in the wake of the collapse of continental Europe in the spring of 1940 was an excellent move for the Institute of Advanced Study, through which it was able to strengthen its position in the American scientific field by becoming a major research centre on international economic questions. The EFTD team was immediately integrated into the networks of experts that would bring the post-war economic order into being. As soon as he arrived, Loveday contacted the federal administration (Departments of State, Commerce and Labor, Agriculture, Federal Reserve Board) as well as organisations of experts such as the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Brookings Institution and several universities, in order to organise collaboration and exchange information.[17] Between 1940 and 1946, even though the LoN was discredited as an organisation, the EFTD produced an important body of scientific research, which was a major contribution to planning the post-war global economic order that would be put in place at the Bretton Woods conference.[18]

13 Dodds, Tenbroeck & Aydelotte to Avenol, 12 June 1940, LON/C1624.

14 Avenol to Harold W. Dodds, 15 June 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/153. Clavin, *Securing the World Economy,* 261.

15 Willits memorandum, 3 July 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/153.

16 File reports of the Supervisory Commission, LoN 10B/R4520/4072/4072; Norma Thompson to Loveday, 21 September 1945, LoN/C1625.

17 Kittredge interview with Loveday, 9 December 1940, RF 1.1/100/18/154.

18 Clavin, *Securing the World Economy,* chapters 8 and 9.

The International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation stays behind

Alongside the EFTD, the RF was also called upon to support the move to the United States of the International Institute for Intellectual Cooperation, especially the International Studies Conference that had built up over the years an important network of experts throughout Europe. This project was aborted, however, because the Conference fitted less easily into the intellectual agenda of the RF which, in turn, showed little enthusiasm for taking care of its transfer to the United States.

Since 1935, the Foundation had generously funded the International Studies Conference, which focused its work, from 1937 onwards, on the organisation of international trade. But the RF was hardly satisfied with the results of its investment: many members of the Conference's national committees were not trained economists and the members of the American committee were reluctant to continue working with an organisation that they viewed as lacking in scientific competence and unable to accumulate valuable expertise on the international economic situation. This, in essence, is what Jacob Viner, professor at the University of Chicago and advisor to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau Jr., told the new director of the Social Science Division of the RF, Joseph Willits in July 1939 when the latter brought up the possibility of moving the Conference to the United States in the event of a war in Europe.[19] A change of the Conference's leadership in October 1939 would further widen the gulf between them and the RF; its new director Pitman Potter, Professor of International Law at the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva, had little interest in international economic questions. He wanted to centre the Conference's research on the question of global governance and immediately after his appointment he sent the RF a programme of research on the preparation of a federal organisation of the world after the war.[20] At the same time, the Foundation gave a grant to the American Committee of the Conference to launch a process of reflection designed «to lay the foundations for American participation in a post-war settlement»,[21] the first step of which was to held a conference in January 1940 to «discuss what research studies might be stimulated in American institutions relating to the interests of the United States in the problem of post-war settlement»[22] under the coordination of Edward M. Earle, a member of the School of Economics and Politics at the Institute of Advanced Study. Very American-centric, the project was less concerned with the political organisation of the post-war world than with the position that the United States would occupy in the new economic and geopolitical circumstances resulting from the conflict.

19 Conversation between Willits and Jacob Viner, 17 July 1939, RF 1.1/100/106/959.

20 Kittredge memorandum, 19 October 1939, RF 1.1/100/ 106/959.

21 Grant-in-aid form, 27 October 1939, RF 1.1/100S/109/ 983.

22 RF minutes, 19 January 1940, RF 1.1/100S/109/983.

This lack of enthusiasm for the work of the Conference was also in evidence with regard to the IIIC in general, which in the eyes of the Foundation's directors had two major faults: firstly for supporting French influence and secondly for seeking to be a sort of global ministry of culture and launching a multitude of projects without being able to finance them, rather than concentrating on a handful of precise fields in order to build-up expertise which could lead directly to concrete solutions. This was symptomatic of a wider conceptual division between the idea of intellectual cooperation, promoted principally by the French, and the notion of scientific expertise extolled by the British and the Americans. This divide characterised the entire history of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, which explains the failure of the move of the International Studies Conference. In an internal memo of the Foundation dating from the summer of 1939, Raymond Fosdick expressed the lack of esteem that he felt towards the IIIC:

> Personally, I have little confidence in the Institute of intellectual cooperation. I have followed their work for nearly twenty years, and I think they have shown in most cases a distinct inability to come to grips with practical problems in any realistic way. Too much of their work is largely on paper, and they are specialists in calling conferences that get nowhere.[23]

Despite all this, when the German invasion led Henri Bonnet to sound out Fosdick about the subject of a possible move of the Conference and the Institute to the United States,[24] Fosdick did not shut the door immediately. At the beginning of July, when the Germans, having entered Paris, shut down the IIIC, numerous transatlantic discussions between Bonnet, the officers of the RF and representatives of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, as well as with the director of the Conference's American committee Edward M. Earle, led to a project to transfer the Conference to Princeton.[25] However, Pittman Potter refused to let the Conference be annexed by the American committee and its own American-centred project, considering it more important to extend reflection to global problems.[26] The discussions would continue until April 1941 after a final attempt by Potter to house the Conference in the offices of the Institute of Pacific Relations, itself largely funded by the RF. Edward Carter, the director of the Institute, with the implicit approval of the Foundation declined the proposal, arguing that, from a scientific point of view, the Conference was incapable of detaching itself completely from the «tradition of the IIIC».[27] For the officers of the RF, the decision was final: the Conference was hence-

23 Fosdick note, 28 June 1939, RF 2–1939/100/169/1228.
24 Bonnet to Fosdick, 5 June 1940, RF 1.1/100/106/960
25 Bonnet to Kittredge, 26 June 1940; Davis to Bonnet, 10 July 1940, RF 1.1/100/106/960.
26 Potter to Earle, 15 July 1940, RF 1.1/100/106/960.
27 Carter to Kittredge, 29 April 1941, RF 1.1/100/106/960.

forth out of the game, and there were enough organisations competent in the field of international relations to be able to do without it, such as the recently installed EFTD, the Institute of Pacific Relations and the Council on Foreign Relations.[28] Neither would the IIIC have been of much use to the Americans, given their strategy to Americanise intellectual cooperation that manifested itself through the organisation of the Havana conference in November 1941.[29] The RF thus selected experts disposed to work on the organisation of the post-war global order. While the members of the EFTD met their criteria, this was not the case when it came to the members of the International Studies Conference.

2. The Rockefeller Foundation and UNRRA

The second contribution of the RF towards preparations for the post-war situation lay in its cooperation with the American administration in the framework of UNRRA. The Foundation would bring two assets to this new organisation: its know-how and its network of contacts.

From Public Health to Rehabilitation

When the Second World War broke out in Europe, the RF organised a Health Commission to Europe (from July 1940) under the supervision of the director of the Foundation's International Health Division, Wilbur Sawyer, in order to examine the impact of the war on public health and to find a means of remedying the situation. Its objective was to «cooperate with governmental and other agencies in health maintenance during the wartime and in the speedy resurrection of health safeguards and health agencies in areas where war has passed».[30] In the summer of 1940, Sawyer and his collaborators visited England, France, Spain and Portugal with two objectives: to prevent epidemics and to tackle problems of nutrition, particularly those caused by impact of rationing on the health of adults and, above all, children.

At the end of 1940, the RF supported the creation of two hygiene research institutes by the French Vichy government, one in Paris, the other in Marseille, the latter directed by André Chevallier, former Rockefeller fellow, assisted by George K. Strode, associate director of the International Health Division.[31] In the spring of 1941, the Foundation left France definitively, while the work it had undertaken was continued by the Marseille institute under the auspices of the Vichy government, which created a National Institute of Hygiene in November 1941 that focused its activities on problems of nutrition. But the work of the Rockefeller Health Commission in Europe continued and, as the conflict spread, it became the Rockefeller Foundation

28 Kittredge to Carter, 2 May 1941, 1.1/100/106/960.
29 See the article by Corinne Pernet in this volume.
30 Rockefeller Foundation, *Annual Report* (hereafter RFAR) 1943, 53.
31 J. F. Picard, «Aux origines de L'INSERM, André Chevallier et l'Institut National d'Hygiène», in: *Sciences sociales et santé*, 21 (2003) 1, 5–26.

Health Commission to signify that it henceforth extended its activities to the whole world.[32] It continued to cooperate in Europe with national authorities, notably in Spain and Britain, as well as in Burma, China, South Africa, India and Russia from 1941 onwards;[33] in North Africa the next year following the Allied landings, and subsequently in Egypt and Italy from the autumn of 1943 onwards.[34] It was also active in Mexico and in the United States, where it studied the problem of epidemics in the army after the United States had entered the war; it set up medical laboratories in countries where certain diseases were endemic, such as Burma (malaria), North and West Africa (yellow fever) and Spain (typhus),[35] and developed vaccines in cooperation with the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research in New York.

Through its various projects, the RF sought to connect day-to-day fieldwork with its long term strategy. The paradigm that guided its activity was that of eradication, implemented since the early 1920s. But this strategy, that seeks to wipe out a disease by eliminating the agents of its transmission and by carrying out massive vaccination campaigns, seemed to have reached its limits, not least because of advances in transport (boats and, above all, planes), which accelerated the transmission of viruses from one end of the planet to the other. Arguing that health policy «can no longer be thought of exclusively in national terms»,[36] the Foundation thought it necessary to organise a global policy and to experiment with new methods through an organisation encompassing the whole planet. The League of Nations Health Organization, now inactive, was no longer able to play this role, but RF officers were aware of the important role it played in the birth of a worldwide health policy: «Whatever we may think of the League of Nations», observed Raymond Fosdick, «its Health Organization blazed a new trail in the international attack on disease – a trail which must be widened into a firm road.» The Foundation officers thought it above all necessary to create an epidemiological information service based on the service created by the LoN, but this time on a world-wide scale. It thus took on the role of passing on the legacy of the HO, a legacy that was partly its own given the intense long-term collaboration between the two organisations.

Moreover, the men of the RF were conscious that the health problems resulting from the war were on a scale that could not be tackled solely by a private organisation such as their own, with a modest budget (spending around four million dollars a year) and limited logistics. They were also aware that the difficulties faced by those countries in the process of being liberated went far beyond health and medical problems, which represented the core of the RF's expertise; while undoubtedly important, they were only part of the problem. It was therefore necessary to expand the project. The American government, meanwhile, was in the process of developing its

32 RFAR, 1941, 76.
33 Ibid., 1942, 64.
34 Ibid., 1944, 25.
35 Ibid., 1941, 20–26.
36 Ibid., 1943, 19 (and the subsequent citation).

international strategy, broadly sketched out in August 1941 in the Atlantic Charter but lacking a practical dimension. It was from the encounter between the government's global strategy and the Foundation's specific expertise that the concept of rehabilitation emerged, encompassing not only emergency public health measures and the provision of material but also the resurrection of economic structures in liberated countries. The creation of UNRRA in November 1943 was its first tangible outcome.

UNRRA: A Rockefeller Super-Foundation?

Composed of 44 countries but mainly financed by the United States, UNRRA was the first major intergovernmental agency in the newly emerging group of international organisations and aimed not only to provide emergency aid and to reconstruct the economic apparatus of nation states but also to serve as a model for a new form of international cooperation.[37] Its development can be traced back to two sources:[38] firstly, to the emergency aid operations undertaken during the First World War by American organisations such as the Commission for Relief in Belgium or the American Relief Administration, and secondly, to the LoN Health Organisation and to its international activities throughout the interwar period. The RF was at the intersection of these two genealogies and provided the link between them: on the one hand, it carried out its own emergency wartime relief efforts, which it continued after 1918 through a systematic policy of support for public health initiatives in numerous countries in Europe and the world (nursing schools, dispensaries, training of public health administrators, etc.); on the other hand, it was also one of the main supporters of the HO throughout its history.

From 1943 onwards, the work of the RF would merge with that of UNRRA, to which it passed on not only its long experience in the field but also many of its operating methods, particularly in the field of public health. The connection between these two organisations was made via the medical services of the US Army, in which members of the RF participated after the American entry into the war. In 1942, twelve of the 28 members of the Foundation's International Health Division[39] employed in the United States were put at the disposal of the Army's medical commissions; the others (42 persons), spread throughout the countries where the Foundation was active, carried out all or part of their activities in cooperation with the Army, notably in South-East Asia and North and West Africa. The director of the International Health Division, Wilbur Sawyer, was appointed as the head of the Army's Division of Tropical Disease, while his associate director George K. Strode

37 J. Reinisch, «‹We shall Rebuild Anew a Powerful Nation›: UNRRA, Internationalism and National Reconstruction in Poland», in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, 43(2008) 3, 455.

38 J. Reinisch, «Internationalism in Relief: The Birth (and Death) of UNRRA», in: *Past & Present*, 210 (suppl 6)(2011), 258–289.

39 Not to be confused with the Health Commission (see above).

was appointed as an advisor to the State Department.[40] The RF was thus closely involved in the creation of the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations by the Department of State, since the vice president of the Foundation F, Selskar Gunn was made available to the Office in January 1943 to assist Herbert Lehman in the creation of UNRRA[41] with the help of another important figure in American philanthropy, the executive director of the Milbank Memorial Fund Frank Boudreau. In April, Gunn sent Fosdick a provisional version of the plan for UNRRA, which sought to draw on the long experience of the LoN Health Organisation, to which it referred at length.[42] This inheritance is even clearer in the case of Ludwig Rajchman, the former medical director of the Hygiene Section, who would be approached at the beginning of 1944 by UNRRA to write a report on European public health problems.[43] Gunn, meanwhile, stayed at the side of Herbert Lehman until March 1944, at which point, weakened by illness, he had to retire (he died in August).

When UNRRA was created officially in November 1943, its proximity to the RF was clear: in August 1944, Wilbur Sawyer, aged 65, retired from the Foundation and immediately became director of the Division of Health, the largest division of UNRRA with 1400 members including almost 600 doctors and 600 nurses.[44] He played a crucial role, not only in the coordination of the organisation's activities but also in preparing the transition to the World Health Organisation, taking part in the planning committee created in December 1946 to outline the new institution. UNRRA also engaged Alexander Makinsky in the autumn of 1943,[45] who knew the European field perfectly, as well as Alan Gregg, director of the Medical Science Division, who joined a committee on medical literature charged with the task of reequipping the libraries of devastated regions with scientific publications, an operation that the Foundation had already undertaken on a grand scale after 1918.[46] To this list should be added Mary Tennant, a key actor in the teaching of nursing in the United States and a member of the Foundation since 1927, who knew the field perfectly having toured all of the nursing schools financed by the Foundation, and who was also Chairman of the Foreign Postwar Planning Committee of the US National Nursing Council. The list does not end here: Daniel E. Wright[47] joined UNRRA as a malaria expert, while George K. Strode became a member of the yellow fever com-

40 RFAR *1942*, 13.

41 Herbert Lehman (general Director, UNRRA) to Fosdick, 29 January 1944, RF 2–1944/200/265/1825.

42 Gunn to Fosdick (UNRRA. Proposed health program and organization), 26 April 1943, RF 2–1943/200/247/1707.

43 Rachjman Report on European Problems, May 1944. Sent to Herbert Lehman, 22 May 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826.

44 *UNRRA in Europe 1945–1947*, UNRRA European Regional Office, London, 1947, 101.

45 Roger F. Evans (RF) to Colonel Harris (Director of personnel, UNRRA), 28 April 1944, RF 2–1944/200/265/1825.

46 L. Tournès, «Comment devenir une superpuissance intellectuelle? La fondation Rockefeller et la documentation scientifique», in: C. Hauser et al. (eds.), *La diplomatie par le livre. Réseaux et circulation internationale de l'imprimé de 1880 à nos jours*, Paris 2011, 165–180.

47 RFAR 1944, 49.

mission in September 1944.[48] Other members of the Health Division of UNRRA were formerly connected to the Foundation; this was the case of Geraldo H. de Paula Souza,[49] one of the pioneers of public health in Brazil and one of the first Brazilian fellows selected by the foundation in 1918 to study at the new Faculty of Hygiene and Public Health of Johns Hopkins University. On his return to Brazil in 1920 he directed the Faculty of Hygiene and Public Health in the state of Sao Paulo, and later its Public Hygiene Service; when UNRRA was created he became head of the Epidemic Control Branch.[50] It was even envisaged, when UNRRA was set up in China in autumn 1944, that the task of representing the organisation would be given to one of the members of the RF already there, but Raymond Fosdick, who had just tasked him with a mission in India, refused to make him available to the agency.[51]

With all these key figures, it was as if the International Health Division had become part of UNRRA, the activities of the two organisations being closely interconnected between 1943 and 1946. The global framework of the activities of UNRRA reproduced, on a larger scale, the procedures tried out by the RF on the ground since the 1910s: the carrying out of preliminary surveys to identify the problems to be prioritised; epidemiological research (also tried out by the HO with the support of the RF); technical assistance through the provision of medical equipment, vaccines (in the case of yellow fever UNRRA used the vaccine developed by the International Health Division in 1936)[52] or medical literature; the training of doctors and nurses; and a permanent link with local governmental and non-governmental actors.[53]

The Rockefeller Fellows and Reconstruction

The contribution of the RF to the work of reconstruction was not limited to the expertise it had amassed in the course of its technical assistance activities around the world. The Foundation also brought an important network built up since 1918 in international scientific circles linked to its areas of competence (public health, medical education, biomedical research, social sciences). Its ambitious international policy led it to finance dozens of universities, research centres and public administrations; to this list should be added the establishment of an important programme of individual grants in 1917 (known as the «fellowship programme») from which

48 James A. Crabtree (UNRRA) to Strode, 9 September 1944; Strode to Crabtree, 11 September 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826.

49 G. H. de Paula Souza to Strode, 10 October 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826; A. M. de Queiróz Pérez-Ramos, «Resgatando a Memória dos Patronos. Geraldo Horácio Paula Souza (1889–1951)», in: *Boletim Academia Paulista de Psicologia,* XXVI, 1(2006), 18–29.

50 G. H. de Paula Souza to Strode, 10 October 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826; de Queiróz Pérez-Ramos, «Resgatando a Memória»,18–29.

51 Tingfu F. Tsiang (member for China of the Council of UNRRA) to Fosdick, 17 October 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826.

52 RFAR 1945, 67.

53 For an example of this activity on the ground see L. Tournès, *Sciences de l'homme et politique. Les fondations philanthropiques américaines en France au XXe siècle,* Paris 2013 [2011].

almost 6000 individuals benefited between 1917 and 1939, including 2500 Europeans. The RF was thus not merely an organisation for science management but also a sort of scientific travel agency.

When the Second World War broke out, the Foundation attempted to continue its international activities for as long as possible, including in Europe (as in the aforementioned case of France). The heads of the Foundation felt that it was necessary to maintain ties with the old continent in order to ensure the future of American science. While the war that engulfed Europe seemed to confirm the transfer of scientific hegemony to the United States, a process that had already begun during the inter-war years, Raymond Fosdick underlined the extent to which the United States was «dependent upon Europe for stimulation and leadership in relation to many segments of our intellectual and cultural activity» recalling that in 1939 five of the six Nobel prizes were awarded to Europeans. He concluded that «America needs to be humble about this question of intellectual leadership»[54] and that it would be a strategic error to burn bridges with Europe. While the fact that scientific research had to be stopped in this region certainly favoured American intellectual leadership in the short term, the consequences would also be dramatic in the long term for the United States.

Maintaining exchanges between the two continents was therefore vital, although it would prove increasingly difficult. In June 1940, the Foundation had to close its European bureau in Paris, transferring it first to La Baule (Brittany) and then to Lisbon before finally setting it up in London in July 1941. Meanwhile, the Foundation's financial grants to European institutions, which represented the majority of its international activity, were interrupted one after another. Between summer 1940 and spring 1941 the Foundation also withdrew from most of the countries in the Mediterranean in which it had set up programmes; the only European countries in which it remained were Spain and Portugal. Beyond Europe, it shut its office in Shanghai to transfer it to Manila, retaining a presence only in Southern China, but continued to work in India, Burma, Africa (Belgian Congo, Uganda, Nigeria), and Latin America. The fellowship programme, meanwhile, experienced a considerable decline: while the Foundation had awarded between 250 and 350 fellowships every year during the 1920s, this number fell to less than 150 from 1940 onwards, primarily because of the lack of European fellows, whose number fell by 70 per cent.[55]

However, the RF maintained contacts with the European intelligentsia in two different ways. Firstly, by aiding the emigration of European intellectuals, beginning in 1933 with Hitler's rise to power and continuing in 1940 as a large part of Europe fell under the Nazi yoke. Among them were many former Rockefeller fellows, with whom the Foundation had maintained links and whose integration into the Ameri-

54 RFAR 1939, 14–16.

55 RF Statistical Summary of Fellowships 1915–1945, RF 1.2/100/43/320.

can university system or in the branches of the federal administration, such as the Office of Strategic Services, was facilitated by the Foundation. Secondly, through the presence of numerous national delegations in exile in the United States, by which it was informed of the fate of former fellows who remained in Europe.

Therefore, between 1941 and 1943 these links weakened but did not disappear, which explains the relative speed with which the RF reconstructed its network when the liberation of Europe was imminent. It would use this network when supporting the reconstruction work carried out by UNRRA. When UNRRA set out its plans, it became clear that the US could not supply all the necessary personnel and that it would be necessary to rely on local actors. In the spring of 1943, Mary Tennant was approached by the Department of State to provide the Office of Foreign Relief and Rehabilitation Operations with a list of qualified nurses who were ready to leave for Europe to select the battalions of local nurses necessary to work in the liberated regions.[56] Gunn and Boudreau, meanwhile, approached their colleagues still employed by the RF to obtain a list of European former fellows, especially in the field of public health,[57] but also in the other departments of the Foundation, in order to use them in the work of reconstruction. The fellows were an invaluable asset for the Americans, the majority (particularly in the field of public health and nursing education) having studied in the United States and being familiar with the organisational and intellectual paradigms on which UNRRA's work was based. In March 1943, Alexander Makinsky sent Bourdreau a list of all the Foundation's European fellows since 1917, totalling almost 2500 persons, including 600 in the field of public health[58] from 23 countries.[59] Many of them had, after their fellowship, pursued careers in academia or in public health administration, where they held important positions.

Such was the case in Greece, for example, where the RF had led a campaign against malaria headed by Daniel E. Wright,[60] helping the government create a malariology section at the Ministry of Public Health, supporting the development of the Athens School of Hygiene and granting 22 fellowships to doctors or nurses between 1930 and 1939, allowing them to be trained at the faculties of public health at Johns Hopkins and Harvard or, in the case of nurses, at the University of Toronto's School of Nursing.[61] The RF thus contributed to the training of a large section

56 Crabtree (Chief medical officer, Office of foreign relief and rehabilitation operations), 6 April 1943, RF 2–1943/200/247/1707.

57 Gunn to Appleget, 11 February 1943; Boudreau to Sawyer, 27 February 1943, RF 2–1943/200/247/1707.

58 Makinsky to Boudreau, 19 March 1943, 2–1943/200/247/1707; Roger F. Evans (RF) to Colonel Harris (Director of personnel, UNRRA), 28 April 1944, RF 2–1944/200/265/1825.

59 European fellowships 1917–1943, compiled for use of Office of relief [sic] and rehabilitation operations, RF 1.2/100/43/319.

60 K. Gardikas, «Relief Work and Malaria in Greece 1943–1947», in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, 43(2008) 3, 493–508.

61 European fellowships, 1917–1943, RF 1.2./100/43/319, 185–187.

of the personnel in the fight against malaria: this was true, for example, of Gerasimos Alivisatos, who became director of the School of Hygiene in Athens in 1936, as well as of Grigorios Livadas, who succeeded him in 1940. When UNRRA arrived in Greece in 1944 its main task was to re-establish the fight against malaria, which had been disrupted by the occupation of the country by Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. Once again it was Daniel E. Wright who, now working for UNRRA, coordinated this work by drawing on the pre-war project: in August 1944 he informed the head of UNRRA that there was no need to send malariologists to Greece as there were already many competent malariologists with whom he had re-established contact as soon as the occupiers had departed. From 1945 onwards, UNRRA launched a campaign to eradicate malaria based on the massive use of DDT, in close cooperation with the School of Hygiene in Athens, still directed by Livadas.[62]

A similar situation can be observed in Poland, where the RF had been present since 1919; when it returned to the country in 1945, one of its principal interlocutors, the former fellow Martin Kacprzak, was president of the National Health Council; the following year he was a member of the planning committee tasked with outlining plans for the WHO. Likewise, when the Foundation returned to Yugoslavia, it could rely on a dense network of former fellows, particularly Andrija Stampar,[63] a long-standing acquaintance of the Foundation and key figure in the organisation of public health in the country between the wars. In 1945 he was doyen of the faculty of medicine in Zagreb, and it was entirely natural that Wilbur Sawyer should re-establish contact with him to organise the field work. At that time, both men were also part of the WHO planning committee.

It should be noted, moreover, that the Rockefeller Health Commission, which had not yet formally been absorbed by UNRRA, granted fellowships from 1944 onwards as a means of allowing doctors and nurses, cut off from the medical advances made during the war, to refresh their knowledge in the United States.[64] At the beginning of 1944, a recruitment committee was set up for this purpose, composed of Frank Boudreau, Selskar Gunn and Raymond Fosdick.[65] At this time UNRRA did not yet have a specific budget for travel grants, so the RF covered the costs. Most of the first beneficiaries seem to have been former fellows; such was the case in China, where they formed the entirety of the first group of seven doctors selected to go and update their knowledge in the United States in the summer of 1944, arguing that their familiarity with Western medicine guaranteed the success

62 M. J. Vine, «The Anti-Malaria Campaign in Greece-1946», in: *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 1(1948) 1, 197–204.

63 Z. Dugac et al., «Care for Health Cannot be Limited to one Country or one Town Only, it Must Extend to the Entire World: Role of Andrija Stampar in Building the World Health Organization», in: *Croatian Medical Journal*, 49(2008) 6, 697–708.

64 RFAR, 1945, 97.

65 Note, 4 February 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826.

of their stay.[66] In 1946, UNRRA created its own fellowship programme,[67] which copied two key elements from the Rockefeller model: it involved organising training sessions for hand-picked local doctors and nurses given by foreign specialists invited by UNRRA, as well as offering travel grants to local specialists. This programme, set up in the course of 1946, was limited: it involved around 155 doctors and 120 nurses, most of whom went to the US to study.[68]

3. Conclusion

The RF thus played an important role in two of the key testing grounds for the United Nations system. The first of these was the EFTD, a discrete, almost clandestine group of experts (for it was never officially invited to the big founding conferences of the period 1943–1945) that nevertheless played a central role in post-war planning, particularly from an economic perspective, through its important scientific research. The second was UNRRA, a transitional institution between the LoN and the UN which, when it came to health initiatives, took the majority of its operating procedures directly from the model provided by the RF. The latter operated on a different level from the US federal administration: the Foundation provided financial backing and practical expertise, as well as contributing via the training of experts, notably through its fellowship programme. Its actions do not fit in easily with the clear-cut ideological interpretations either of those who praise the selfless disinterest of American philanthropy working for the good of humanity or of those who criticise the participation of large foundations in the American imperialist enterprise. On the one hand, the RF incontestably contributed to the Americanisation of the United Nations system: while the architecture of the newly organised global economy had been developed, in part by the LoN in Europe before the war, and later through the significant scientific work of the EFTD between 1940 and 1946, it became naturalised as «American» during the conflict owing to the presence of the EFTD experts on American soil and their inclusion in the American scientific and political networks that constructed the Bretton Woods system. On the other hand, the RF was quick to underline the necessity of maintaining links with Europe, both scientific and economic. It was thanks to this logic that it contributed to importing European expertise in the field of global economics into the United States. As such, it contributed as much as or even more than European actors towards carrying forward the legacy of the LoN within the United Nations. It also enriched the American university system and was a source of intellectual stimulation for the American administration that in 1940 was primarily interested in the future position of the United States in the post-war economy and considered the

66 Unknown to Sawyer, 10 June 1944, RF 2–1944/200/266/1826.

67 O. J. Falnes, «The UNRRA Fellowships Program», in: *The Journal Of Higher Education*, 23 (1952) 6, 303–307;343.

68 *UNRRA in Europe*, 112.

total reorganisation of the global economy as a task of secondary importance until the EFTD reminded it that the recovery of the European economy was crucial for the good health of the American economy. It should be added that the operational logic advocated by the RF within UNRRA in the health field also aimed to make the Europeans participants in their own recovery. Even if, in the minds of the Rockefeller officers, former (and future) fellows were destined to promote the alignment of Europe with supposedly more «modern» American practices, the Foundation also aimed to make Europe more autonomous when it came to its own reconstruction. Even when tensions emerged between the United States and the Soviet during the final years of the war, the RF sought to maintain ties, especially with Central and Eastern Europe, attempting after 1943 to reconstruct the international networks it had helped create during the interwar period. This undertaking would only be partially successful, not only because of the gaps left by the war in the ranks of its fellows, but also as a result of the division of Europe from 1947 onwards. The maintenance of East-West links would, however, remain on the agenda of the Foundation during the Cold War.

ABSTRACTS

The Rockefeller Foundation and the Transition from the League of Nations to the UN (1939–1946)

The Rockefeller Foundation played an important role in the transition from the League of Nations to the United Nations through its collaboration with two international organisations. The first was the Economic, Financial and Transit Department (EFTD) of the LoN. By financing its move to the United States and all of its work during the Second World War, the RF would allow it to make a major contribution to the reorganisation of the global economic order after 1945. The second organisation was the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), which the RF provided with staff, working methods, and a network of contacts around the world. The RF was thus deeply involved in the redefinition of the overall structure of the system of international organisations during WWII.

Die Rockefeller-Stiftung und der Übergang vom Völkerbund zu den Vereinten Nationen (1939–1946)

Die Rockefeller-Stiftung spielte eine wichtige Rolle beim Übergang vom Völkerbund zu den Vereinten Nationen. Bedeutend dabei war vor allem ihre Zusammenarbeit mit zwei internationalen Organisationen. Die erste war das Economic, Financial and Transit Department (EFTD) des Völkerbundes. Indem die Rockefeller-Foundation seinen Umzug in die USA finanzierte, ermöglichte sie es ihm, eine wichtige Rolle bei der Umgestaltung der ökonomischen Weltordnung nach 1945 zu spielen. Die Rockefeller-Stiftung beteiligte sich auch an der United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRR). Sie stellte nicht nur das Personal zur Verfügung, sondern stellte überdies ein weltweites Netzwerk von Kontakten bereit. Die Rockefeller-Stiftung war also ein wichtiger Akteur bei der Neuordnung des Systems internationaler Organisationen während des Zweiten Weltkrieges.

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