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Mead and the International Mind

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Abstract
In this paper I analyze the conceptions of internationalism and the international mind that Mead uses in “The Psychological Bases of Internationalism” (1915); in his 1917 Chicago Herald columns defending U.S. entry into the war; in Mind, Self, and Society (1934); and in “National-Mindedness and International Mindedness” (1929). I show how the terms “internationalism” and “the international mind” arose within conversations among some Anglo-American thinkers. While Mead employs these terms in his own philosophical and sociological theorizing, he draws their meaning from these conversations and does not generate their meaning from within his own theorizing. This places Mead among the “conservative internationalists” of his time. With this analysis, I then show how Hans Joas’s criticisms of Mead’s support for the war are misplaced. I also show how Mead’s internationalism, correctly understood, cannot support Mitchell Aboulafia’s construction of Mead’s cosmopolitan self. Throughout, I demonstrate how Mead’s discussions of internationalism need to be read in historical context, and are more political than scholars such as Aboulafia and Joas have supposed.

Keywords: Mitchell Aboulafia, Hans Joas, George Herbert Mead, First World War, Internationalism, International Mind

March 1919. President Wilson had returned to the United States from the Paris Peace Conference with a draft treaty of the proposed League of Nations.1 Illinois Senator Medill McCormick opposed the Treaty. Mead responded to McCormick, stating that America “maintains no rights and seeks...
no ends that are not defensible before the reason and common interests of the world.” A tidy statement, this is, and compatible with Mitchell Aboulafia’s elegant analysis of Mead the internationalist and advocate of international mindedness, whom Aboulafia places in companionable dialogue with Kant’s *sensus communis*, with Arendt’s community of all humanity, and with Smith’s impartial spectator. However, the mood darkens when we realize that Mead made this claim immediately after asserting that the League of Nations was needed to safeguard the Monroe Doctrine. Without that backing “we will find ourselves faced by a league of Latin nations in America, resentful of our assertion of supremacy in this hemisphere. Over against such a league we would be compelled to maintain a vast military establishment and our whole life would be vitiated by the very system against which we took up arms in a Prussianized Germany.” Mead saw the League of Nations as a guarantor of U.S. hegemony over Latin America, thus relieving the United States of the burden of maintaining “a vast military establishment” through which to accomplish the same end. Mead’s endorsement of U.S. hegemony in Latin America does not sit well with Kant’s, Arendt’s and Smith’s visions of humanity. How are we to understand his advocacy of internationalism and international mindedness?

In this paper I will show how Mead’s discussions of internationalism and the international mind were his contributions to conversations taking place among some Anglo-American thinkers. The terms’ meanings arose within these conversations. While Mead employs these terms in his own philosophical and sociological theorizing, he draws their meaning from these conversations and does not generate their meaning from within his own theorizing. In Part One I describe the conversation within which the “international mind” played a role, and in Parts Two through Five I examine how Mead participated in this conversation between 1915 and 1929. Part Two focuses on his 1915 article, “The Psychological Basis for Internationalism.” Here I show how Mead places then current conceptions of internationalism within his own philosophical and sociological theorizing. In Part Three I show how Mead’s 1917 *Chicago Herald* columns defending U.S. entry into the war and his support for the League to Enforce Peace place him among “conservative internationalists,” and argue that Hans Joas’s criticisms of Mead’s support for the war are misplaced. In Part Four I examine Mead’s comments about the international mind in *Mind, Self, and Society*, and show how these passages do not support Aboulafia’s construction of Mead’s cosmopolitanism. Finally, in Part Five I examine Mead’s 1929 essay, “National-Mindedness and International Mindedness,” and show how it reveals gaps in Mead’s theorizing. Throughout, I demonstrate how Mead’s discussions of internationalism need to be read in historical context, and are more political than scholars such as Aboulafia and Joas have supposed.
I. The "International Mind"

In the early decades of the twentieth-century, lots of "minds" were bandied about by various Anglo-American thinkers. Dewey gives us the "national mind," the "social mind," the "legal mind," the "popular mind," the "forewarned mind," and finally, the "post-war mind." Randolph Bourne added the "war mind," the "state mind," and the "herd mind" to the "international mind." British philosopher L.P. Jacks commented that before the war, the "British mind" did not have the "mind" of an imperial power, that is, the citizens of Britain "found it difficult to retain the imperial point of view." Horace Kallen thought the most internationally minded people were international financiers and entrepreneurs, who had figured out how to profit handsomely during both peace and wartime.

The "international mind" functioned as a cultural buzzword. Educators said the curriculum needed to become more internationally minded. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace established International Mind Alcoves in many community libraries. Sinclair Lewis in Main Street, bemoans, "Though a Gopher Prairie regards itself as a part of the Great World, . . . it will not acquire the scientific spirit, the international mind, which would make it great.

There were cynics. Samuel Crowther thought Adam Smith performed a sleight-of-hand with his "cosmopolitan theories . . . the same theories which turn up today in the guise of the international mind." Because Great Britain waited until its manufacturing sector was far ahead of everyone else's before removing its tariffs, and only then proclaimed free trade an economic verity, Crowther labeled Smith "a highly skilled British ballyhoo artist who succeeded in elevating national expediency to the plane of highly respectable economic theory." Like "globalization" and "diversity" today, the international mind had no precise definition, yet it functioned within a particular conversation among some Anglo-American thinkers. These thinkers believed that widespread international engagement existed as a matter of fact, and that by participating in these engagements, people could develop international minds. They thought war was a barbaric regression away from civilized behavior, and that international organizations should be established through which disputes could be addressed through negotiation rather than war. Their politics varied widely. Some remained pacifists throughout the war; others supported the war effort whole-heartedly. Some were conservative laissez-faire capitalists; others leaned toward socialism. Their thinking on imperialism and government-sponsored social reform showed the same variability. Since I do not know what Mead read, I will restrict my sources for this paper to people I know that Mead knew, and to people whose writings were widely available to educated Americans. British participants in this conversation included Bertrand Russell, Oxford professor and one-time Royce student L.P. Jacks, and Cambridge
professor G. Lowes Dickinson, all of whom published in the Atlantic Monthly and in the University of Chicago’s International Journal of Ethics.

Nicolas Murray Butler, philosopher, and long-time President of Columbia University, claimed to have coined the phrase, “the international mind,” and represented the more establishment and conservative side of the conversation. In his 1912 address to the assembled political, legal, and business elites at the Lake Mohonk Conference on International Arbitration, Butler gave this explicit definition. “The international mind is nothing else than that habit of thinking of foreign relations and business, and that habit of dealing with them, which regard the several nations of the civilized world as friendly and cooperating equals in aiding the progress of civilization, in developing commerce and industry, and in spreading enlightenment and culture throughout the world.”

For Butler the context for discussions about the international mind was how to substitute “Law for war, peace with righteousness for triumph after slaughter, the victories of right and reasonableness for those of might and brute force.” In a jab at Theodore Roosevelt, Butler said that to swagger, swing sticks, and threaten military action was not in keeping with the international mind.

Butler’s concept of the international mind functioned within the late nineteenth century’s historical trajectory of social evolution from the stage of barbarism, where groups settled differences by force, toward the growth of civilized societies, characterized by science, learning, art, and culture. Societies became more civilized as reason gained control over instinct and unruly passions. International commerce and international juridical and legal institutions contributed to peaceful internationalism among civilized nations. Like most people in this conversation, Butler assumed that “international” referred to “the civilized world,” i.e., European nations, and white settler colonies such as Canada and Australia. The United States as a white settler ex-colony, and sometimes Japan and some South American republics, were also included. Colonized peoples and territories lagged behind on the path toward civilization, so it was consistent with international morality and justice that they be colonized.

For Butler and many others, an international mind is not opposed to war per se. When “civilized nations” fail to resolve disputes peacefully, nations may respond to aggressors with violence. Butler praised Germany, France and Great Britain for their adjudication of the Agadir affair, in which Germany gave up its claim in French-dominated Morocco, in exchange for a slice of the Congo. Better to negotiate these matters as civilized gentlemen, than to fight as barbarians.

Many Europeans and Americans assumed that civilized nations had outgrown the barbaric and adolescent practice of going to war. Highly respected and widely quoted theorists such as Jean de Bloch and Norman Angell documented the extensive economic interdependence
among “civilized” nations, and predicted that none of the Great Powers would be foolish enough to destabilize this commerce by going to war. Bourne reminisced on the pre-war years, “The ‘international mind’ was becoming more and more universal, so that an inter-European war would be dreaded with the horror of a civil conflict.”

II. “The Psychological Basis for Internationalism,” 1915

To internationally minded Europeans and Anglo-Americans, the Great War’s eruption in August 1914 was incomprehensible. Why were so many Europeans with international minds—scientists, intellectuals, artists, and socialists—instantly overcome with nationalistic fervor? Mead addressed this question in his March 1915 essay, “The Psychological Basis for Internationalism,” published in Survey, a leading social reform journal. Mead’s starting premise, that the war had untethered hostile impulses from the influences of reason and civilizing experience, was widely shared at the time. His conclusion, that the international order, based on independent, sovereign nation-states, was deeply dysfunctional, was also part of the conversation. What Mead added was his own psychological analysis of these phenomena. While Mead framed his discussion in terms of his own theory of the social self, the conception of internationalism that he used is consistent with the internationalism of Butler and others. Using an analogy between the social setting within which the self is constructed, and the international setting within which nation-states are constituted, Mead in this essay points out the psychological costs of insisting on full national sovereignty and the contradictions involved in holding commitments both to the right of national self-defense and to internationalism.

Mead shared the belief of Butler and others that existing international organization, particularly in international commerce and international law, was highly developed, making war between European nations unnecessary. Mead saw no reason for nations to fight anymore. Constitutions had been adopted which provided for orderly change in government; international commerce gave access to labor and resources, eliminating the need to conquer new territories. In this essay Mead explores the psychological implications of the fact that all the belligerents claimed they were fighting in self-defense. Mead explains that in fighting to defend their country, people experience “overwhelming moments of emotion” of “complete identification with each other in the whole community.” Mead says these experiences are akin to those of saints and martyrs; i.e., the “types of the highest experiences that human nature has attained.” The war raises the question, “Are these (spiritual experiences) so valuable that we can afford to purchase them at the expense of Armageddon?”

Using then prevalent psychological theories of primitive social instincts and impulses, Mead describes how this emotional high cannot
be sustained, but soon devolves into hatred of enemy. Mead writes, "To defend successfully their own, men get down to the primitive instincts from which spring battle-fury, the lust of carnage, rape and rapine." As the war continues, one's hard-earned civility is overwhelmed by primitive impulses. Mead also identifies psychological instabilities that accompany the claim that military preparedness is the best guarantee for peace. When a nation maintains a stance of readiness for war, a significant percentage of the population must be in a position of unthinking, unquestioning obedience to command. Mead comments, "It is not and cannot be a nation in conscious control of its own policies and its own fortunes."

Mead applies his theory of the social construction of the self to the international arena. He makes an analogy between the self as constituted through social interaction, and nation-states acquiring a sense of identity through engagement in the international community. Just as the self becomes a self through "taking the attitude of another," so, Mead writes, "Nations, like individuals, can become objects to themselves only as they see themselves through the eyes of others." That is, nation-states become conscious of themselves as nations through participating in the international arena. Mead cites the extensive international contacts and organization that led to growth in industry, science, commerce, and social reform as evidence that an international society in fact already existed. He points out the contradiction entailed by war, in which a nation seeks to destroy the other nations that provide it with the very setting required for its own national self-consciousness.

When a nation's insistence on exclusive national sovereignty is activated by militarism, growth toward international community is threatened. Mead makes his own jab at Roosevelt's hyperbolic masculinist, militaristic rhetoric. While this rhetoric supports "the feeling of an enlarged personality," Mead spurns its "childish assumption that we must pull down amid fire and slaughter the whole structure of the western world to secure bulging sinews, deep chests, and red blood corpuscles." He side with those social reformers whom the militarists deride as "white-blooded and feministic." Growth toward internationalism through social reform is "vastly more intelligently conceived," while nation-state militarism leads to human catastrophe. His Survey readers would have appreciated this confirmation.

In the final paragraph of the essay, Mead identifies the core issue:

Militarism is not simply an evil in itself. It is typical and conservative of a state that is narrowly national in its attitude and that refuses to recognize the international society, that after all has made the self-conscious state possible. The problem is then largely a psychological problem, for it has to do with the change of attitude, the willingness to accept the whole international fabric of society, and to regard the states and the communities of which they are the instruments, as
subject to and controlled by the life of the whole, not as potential ene-
emies for whose assault each state must be forever on the watch.

Mead is saying that if states recognized how their existence depended on “the whole international fabric of society,” and accepted their position in this fabric, it would be the end of state-sovereignty as traditionally conceived, and the end to a unilateral, national right to self-defense.33

In this essay Mead speaks in his own voice in articulating the analogy between selves in society and nations in an international commu-

nity. However, his political conclusions regarding sovereignty, placed in the context of Anglo-American discussions of internationalism at that time, were not novel or radical, nor were they generated from within his own theorizing. G. Lowes Dickinson in his December 1914 and January 1915 Atlantic Monthly articles, gave highly detailed critiques of national sovereignty. Bertrand Russell called war among civilized nations an anachronism, and claimed that “So long as the principle of self-defense is recognized as affording a sufficient justification for war, this tragic conflict of irresistible claims remains unavoidable.”34

We should also note what Mead does not discuss in this article. He does not speculate on the origins of war. He does not discuss territorial or economic imperialism, or whether internationalism entails opposi-
tion to all war. His references to internationalism in this essay pertain to political relations among nation-states, and do not suggest a “community of all humanity,” or the perspective of an impartial spectator. That is, the essay is different from, but consistent with the internationalism of Butler and others described above.

III. Mead’s War-time Essays, July–August 1917

In his May 1917 address to the National Conference on Foreign Rela-
tions, Butler used his definition of the international mind in justifying U.S. entrance into the war. Butler argued that the Allies represented the international mind, while the Germans were pursuing hegemonic control of the world. Thus, it was morally justified for the Allied Powers to use force on behalf of law, justice, right, and the international mind.35 This analysis is consistent with Butler’s pre-war conceptions of inter-
nationalism and the appropriate use of force.

During the war many theorists and activists held a range of positions which all fit under the wider umbrella of “internationalism.” Historian Thomas Knock helpfully sorts American internationalists into progressive and conservative wings. He places Jane Addams, Emily Balch, Max and Crystal Eastman, and some other progressives and socialists among what he calls the “progressive internationalists.” Knock writes, “Jane Addams played a pivotal role in this wing of the internationalist move-
ment; indeed, she personified its purposes and values perhaps better
than anyone else." Progressive internationalists worked for a negotiated end to the conflict. They feared that an Allied military victory would result in a victor's peace, sowing seeds of resentment and hatred that would lead to future wars.

Knock places Butler, Elihu Root, and Former President William Howard Taft with the conservative internationalists, a larger, wealthier, and more elite establishment group, who thought a decisive military victory over Germany was imperative. Most had supported U.S. ventures in the Caribbean, and did not consider these economic and military excursions as imperialistic. Former President Taft, along with other conservative internationalists, founded the League to Enforce Peace. They proposed that nations form a league that would offer arbitration and conciliation for international disputes. They were concerned with international legal machinery, and in contrast to progressive internationalists, were not concerned with economic causes of war or with the undemocratic character of foreign policy. Economist Theodore Marburg stated, "The principal declared purpose of the League to Enforce Peace is to make war, immediate and certain war, upon any nation which goes to war without a previous hearing of the dispute." Mead was a member of the League to Enforce Peace and gave speeches on its behalf.

Mead's wartime articles for the *Chicago Herald* supporting the U.S. entry into the war are consistent with conservative internationalism. Like Butler, Mead in these articles frames the war as a fight between German autocracy and the Allies' democracy. He alludes to points he made in 1915 regarding the costs of war, but claims that Germany left the U.S. with no options. The U.S. had to enter the war, in order to eliminate war as "the arbiter of international life."

We may not like Mead's positions, but Joas is incorrect in calling Mead's support for the war "an about-face" and as demonstrating "the fall of the internationalist Mead into the sin of nationalism." Mead's stance in 1917 represented the dominant form of internationalism at the time, and was consistent with the form of internationalism he had advocated in 1915 in "The Psychological Basis for Internationalism." Joas also claims that "Mead's acceptance of Wilson's foreign policy was possible only because it rested on a profound naivety regarding the economic motives behind American foreign policy," that is, Mead was naive to think that "imperialism was only a problem of the political relations among states, not an economic one." It is true that Mead did not define U.S. economic policies as imperialistic. In his August 2, 1917 *Chicago Herald* article, Mead asserts explicitly that the U.S. has never had and could never have imperialistic aims, and that its foreign policy regarding imperialism as expressed in the Monroe Doctrine was only that of excluding European powers from colonizing in this hemisphere. I do not think Mead's positions here indicate naivety. To interpret his statements, we need a brief detour through the Monroe...
Doctrine. Never formally enacted into law, the Monroe Doctrine evolved out of statements President James Monroe made to Congress in 1823, warning the monarchs of Europe not to attempt further colonization in the western hemisphere. The phrase, “Monroe Doctrine” was coined thirty years later during a Congressional debate. In 1904 President Roosevelt issued his famous “Corollary,” essentially turning the Doctrine into a justification for economic and military interventions in Latin American countries to “maintain order within their boundaries and behave with a just regard for their obligations toward outsiders.” The “order and justice regard” he had in mind was getting Caribbean and Central American nations to pay debts they owed to European and American corporations and governments. Under the Corollary, Presidents Roosevelt, Taft, and Wilson intervened militarily several times in the Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico. Many conservative internationalists at the time were well aware of this practice and did not regard it as a form of imperialism, but thought it was fully appropriate. Mead's references to the Monroe Doctrine in his war essays and in his reply to Senator McCormick mentioned above are consistent with this form of conservative internationalism.

Mead knew of the counter-position. He had reviewed Addams’s 1907 book, Newer Ideals of Peace, in which she argued explicitly against economic imperialism, basing her critique in part on John Hobson’s widely read book from 1902, Imperialism. It is interesting that in his review, Mead focuses on Addams’s chapters that deal with internal social reform, but he does not comment on the linkage Addams sees between international commerce and militaristic imperialism. Also, the Woman's Peace Party was a very vocal critic of Wilson's Caribbean and Mexican ventures. Addams was the national president of the Woman's Peace Party; Mary McDowell, head resident of the University Settlement House where Mead was a trustee, Mead's wife, Helen Castle Mead, and aunt, Dr. Myrna Mead, were members of the Chicago chapter. My point is that Mead's stance on U.S. participation in the war was not uninformed or naive. With Joas, I think Mead was wrong, but one can be wrong without being naive.

We could, of course, direct at Mead the criticism that Bourne directed at Dewey, that supporting the war was contrary to the tenets of pragmatism. We could also use Addams's critique that as means shape ends, it is a contradiction to expect the violence of war to issue in an international, democratic peace. For now, my only point is that Mead's support for the war was consistent with his previous writings, and consistent with a form of internationalism widely held at the time.

**III. The International Mind in Mind, Self, and Society**

Mead makes several scattered references to the international mind in Mind, Self, and Society. Aboulafia uses some of these passages in his
book, *The Cosmopolitan Self*, to support his construction of Mead’s cosmopolitanism. He begins with Mead’s conception of the social self, in which the self internalizes the “generalized other,” or “the expectations of the organized group.” People who participate in multiple groups, e.g., families, clubs, political parties, and so on, can develop imagination and mental flexibility as they move among these different points of view. Aboulafia refers to Mead’s examples of the international scientific community, and abstract groups of creditors and debtors to illustrate how some communities are wider and more inclusive than others. He writes, “These wider communities should be understood in terms of generalized others that are more inclusive, and they can be more inclusive because they operate at higher levels of abstraction.” Through this process, he claims, participants can develop international mindedness. Aboulafia stresses Mead’s naturalism and empiricism, yet sees companionship between Mead’s international mind and Kant’s *sensus communis* and enlarged mentality, Arendt’s notion of membership in a world community by virtue of being human, and Smith’s impartial spectator.

Now I like Aboulafia’s book very much and think it is a legitimate and fruitful way to do philosophy. The following comments are not intended as a thorough critique of the book. What I show here is that Mead’s references to the international mind in *Mind, Self, and Society* cannot serve as supports for Aboulafia’s construction of Mead’s cosmopolitan self. In the passage quoted above Aboulafia misconstrues what Mead means by abstraction, and thus misconstrues the path by which people become internationally minded. He does not recognize how Mead’s references to the international mind are consistent with a conservative internationalism that is not egalitarian or universal.

In the passages in *Mind, Self, and Society* to which Aboulafia refers, by “abstraction” Mead does not mean the sort of intellectual abstractions involved in positing an impartial spectator or a community of all humanity. Mead clarifies the distinction between abstract and concrete thought this way. “In abstract thought the individual takes the attitude of the generalized other toward himself, without reference to its expression in any particular other individuals; and in concrete thought he takes that attitude in so far as it is expressed in the attitudes toward his behavior of those other individuals with whom he is involved in a given social situation or act.” Here, thought is abstract when it is detached from specific individuals, and represents the “generalized other” of specific, functioning communities. Mead repeatedly connects the generalized other, not to an abstract, ethical orientation, but to actual organized communities. A community exists when its members are organized around common interests, where social habits are expressed as social institutions, and where people work and live cooperatively, through functionally differentiated roles. Communities become
wider and more inclusive as their organizational structures become more encompassing. One can think at higher levels of abstraction when the communities in which one participates are themselves wider and more inclusive. It is not the case, contra Aboulafia, that the community can become more inclusive because its members think at higher levels of abstraction.

Aboulafia's examples, taken from Mead, of the international scientific community and of abstract groups of creditors and debtors illustrate this point. At the time, many people referred to the international scientific community as an example of international mindedness. This community was not an abstraction, but an actually functioning, well-organized community of scientists from many nations. They held international conferences, they read each other's work, and they collaborated across national boundaries on scientific research. Also, Mead is clear that abstract groups of creditors and debtors are sub-groups within "highly developed, organized, and complicated human social communities." "Debtor" and "creditor" are not mere abstractions; they name concrete, functionally differentiated roles in actual communities, embedded within institutional structures such as a banking system, legal contracts, a judiciary, and so on.

A close reading of Mead's references to the international mind in *Mind, Self, and Society*, show that Mead did not think we could arrive at international mindedness through intellectual abstraction, as Aboulafia suggests. Mead writes of international minds developing in tandem with the development of articulated, functioning, international communities. These references are consistent with conservative internationalism, as understood at that time, and are political, rather than metaphysical in character. They pose problems for Aboulafia's position, rather than supporting it.

Mead discusses three arenas in which universal communities were becoming functionally organized: in economics, religion, and through the League of Nations. We can to some extent derive what he means by internationalism and the international mind by attending to what he does say about these universal communities, by noting those issues raised by others that Mead does not discuss, and by paying attention to his examples. First, a caveat. We should keep in mind that *Mind, Self, and Society* was based on stenographic lecture notes. Mead delivered these lectures to audiences that had considerable knowledge of then-current political events and attitudes. He could make quick references to these events and attitudes, and assume the students could fill in the context. Thus, today we should exercise caution in interpreting underdeveloped discussions in the text, and to the extent possible, make their contexts explicit. With that caution in mind, I want to make two points through discussing these three universal communities. First, Mead is clear he is using "universal" to refer to actual, historically developing communities
and not to philosophical abstractions such as the community of all humanity or the perspective of an impartial spectator. Second, Mead’s descriptions of these communities reflect conservative internationalism and not the sort of cosmopolitanism Aboulafia attributes to him.

Economics: Mead begins with a simple description of exchange: X has a surplus of something that Y needs. Each is “putting himself in the attitude of the other in the recognition of the mutual value which the exchange has for both.” Mead implies a straightforward development from the impulse to make initial exchanges of this sort to a highly articulated international economic system. He writes, “The more complete economic texture appears in the development of trading itself and the development of a financial medium by means of which such trading is carried on, and there is an inevitable adjustment of the production in one community to the needs of the international economic community,” which he calls a “concrete social organization.” He describes the development of England’s wool industry, which was instrumental in England’s transition from an agricultural to an industrial society, as an example. He assumes a smooth transition from intra-national to inter-national industry, ignoring how British imperialism was deeply woven into its industrialization from the start. He does not address objections made at the time by socialists, Marxists, and anti-imperialists, objections that progressive internationalists took seriously. Instead, the picture of the international economic community that Mead draws mirrors that of Butler and other conservative internationalists. These conservative internationalists did not object to the fact that economic relations based on free trade and supported by the international legal order were maintained by elites and functioned primarily to their benefit.

Mead makes a quick reference to the Monroe Doctrine that strengthens this interpretation. In discussing the growth of international mindedness, Mead asks, “The question whether we belong to a larger community is answered in terms of whether our own action calls out a response in this wider community, and whether its response is reflected back into our own conduct. Can we carry on a conversation in international terms?” For Mead, conversations are possible only among those who share a wide repertoire of gestures and significant symbols, drawn from an organized community’s way of life. Later in the same paragraph Mead notes, “We have to be on good terms with our customers; if we are going to carry on a successful economic policy in South America, we must explain what is the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine, and so on and on.” One could describe U.S.-Latin American economic relations at the time as a community with functionally differentiated roles, but given how the Monroe Doctrine functioned to uphold U.S. hegemony in the region, I stop short of describing such a community as having an ethically or politically satisfactory internationalism or cosmopolitanism.

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Religion: In theorizing about religion, Mead begins with humans' fundamental impulses or attitudes to treat each other with kindliness and sympathy. These impulses have "organizing power"; religion is the vehicle through which they are socialized, as it spirals out toward becoming a universal community. Mead names Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism as universalizing religions. Islam he calls a "relatively primitive sort" of religion, one that "undertook by the force of the sword to wipe out all other forms of society." Christianity and Buddhism, by contrast, are more complex forms of religion, which have brought people together, forming socialized, spiritual groups. Christianity "paved the way for the social progress—political, economic, scientific—of the modern world, the social progress which is so dominantly characteristic of that world." While religions often begin as local community cults, through missionary work, a religion can go beyond the culture's boundaries, moving toward a universal community.

"Universal religion" was a common term in early twentieth century America. It had a particular referent and carried with it particular assumptions. The assumption was that as societies became more modern and scientifically based, so-called "ethnic" or "primitive" religions would disappear, displaced universally by Christianity or a variant thereof. While Mead's discussion of universal religion is sketchy, it is consistent with this common cultural usage. Whether Mead intended to or not, his discussion of universal religion conveyed to his audience a cosmopolitanism or international-mindedness that was Euro-centric and non-egalitarian.

The League of Nations: Finally, Mead had strong hopes for the League of Nations. Alice Hamilton, a close family friend, wrote to her sister in 1923, "Wednesday evening I dined with the Meads... George grows increasingly less intimate and less interesting. He is a fanatical adherent of the League and assumes that all the woes of Europe will be over when once we have joined it... When I think of the way a talk with him used to stretch my mind I feel as if I had lost something." In Hamilton's comment we hear both her own, and Mead's, pain.

We need to take Mead's references to the League of Nations seriously. For Mead, the League of Nations was not just an illustration for a more general point. It was the location through which the international community of nation-states would take form and through which this community's generalized other would arise, making the international mind possible. Mead writes that universal community in a political sense "gets an expression in the League of Nations, where every community recognizes every other community in the very process of asserting itself."

Now Mead never claims that the League of Nations had played its part well, or that its members were well advanced toward establishing functional relationships. Nonetheless, in light of the League of Nations'
centrality to Mead's discussions of the international mind, I find it odd that Mead does not address questions about the League that raged at the time. For example, he does not express concern about the initial membership of the League. Hamilton had been suspicious of the League from the beginning, stating “I was one of those who would have none of it, thinking it would be only a League of the Victors, a second Holy Alliance.” She continues, “Miss Addams, as always, was for accepting even a quarter-loaf, and doing as much with it as could be done. But she did lament the sheer unwisdom of the course followed at the founding of the League.” Dewey worried that some unenthusiastic nation-states might consider the League to be a mechanism for the United States, the British Empire, and France “to control the commerce of the world, and to achieve . . . virtual subjugation of all other peoples.” Also, Mead does not distinguish between nation-states, and national groups located within or lying across state-lines; protection of oppressed minority nationals was a major debate at the League. Nor does Mead discuss the fears and aspirations of colonized peoples, another major topic of discussion at the League. In light of these silences, it is problematic to take Mead's comments about the League of Nations as indications of a thoroughly humanitarian cosmopolitanism.

In spite of these problems with how Mead characterizes these three universal communities, Mead is clear that he is thinking of actual, historically developing, functionally articulated communities, and not of people's powers of imagination or abstraction. While it is true that Mead's discussions of these communities is underdeveloped, his references to these communities as they were then being constituted imply attitudes and institutional structures that we today interpret as imperialist and Euro-centric. If Aboulafia wants to use Mead's references to the international mind and to universal communities to support his claim that Mead had a conception of a cosmopolitan self, he needs to address Mead's conservative internationalism directly and explicitly.

IV. “National Mindedness and International Mindedness,” 1929

In this article we see that Mead has moved some distance from positions he took during the war. He says very little about the international mind in this article, but he probes the national mind, extending and deepening his 1915 concerns about community and violence.

First, though, an astonishing admission. In the course of commenting on why nations have been willing to sign the Kellogg-Briand Pact that outlawed war, Mead writes,

We have learned more from the published archives of Foreign Offices than we have from the records of battlefields and atrocities. We have learned that those who controlled public policies and finally mobilized armies were utilizing fears and hatreds and cupidities and individual
greeds and jealousies which were far from representing issues over which the communities themselves wished to fight or thought they were fighting.**74

For readers in the 21st century, this passage runs by quickly. I wonder, though, if Mead was rejecting his stance of August 1917, when he construed the war as a fight between autocracy and democracy. By this time, the Allies' secret treaties to divide up Germany's colonial possessions, in direct contradiction to Wilson's democratic commitment to national self-determination, had become public knowledge.**75 Bertrand Russell's 1915 analysis was proven right. The war was a tragic episode issuing from the imperial powers' "great game," with duplicities on all sides.**76

By 1929 the League of Nations was established and functioning. While not a member of the League of Nations, the United States had signed the Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war except in self-defense. The U.S. insisted that its right to self-defense included upholding the Monroe Doctrine throughout the western hemisphere.**77 Mead sees the League and the Pact as holding promise. He writes that the League of Nations is "the most serious undertaking to end war which international society has ever made. . . . A hopeful project has been put into actual operation, and the relations of nations have been subject to a publicity and a sort of criticism which are novel in history."**78 He explores this question: since nation-states are the units that meet at the League of Nations, what sort of community unity, i.e., the basis for the community's generalized other, does a nation need in order to be able to settle differences peaceably with other nations?

As in his 1915 essay, Mead again seeks a psychological analysis for why communities resort to violence to settle disputes. Mead turns to James's analyses of "the rooted bellicosity of human nature" as the underlying cause. Mead thinks James overstates the case, commenting that people can satisfy their "bellicosity" by watching movies and reading detective stories. But he does think James is getting at something. That is, war can be the occasion for individuals to identify their own good completely with the common good. He asks, "How shall we get and maintain that unity of society in which alone we can exist?" The Great War proved that Armageddon was the price of this sort of unity. We cannot afford the costs of "feeling" unity; we must "think" it, instead. Instead of a felt "national soul", we need to achieve a "national mind" through which to think our unity. However, thinking by itself will not generate a national mind. Since our rationality comes from internalized social organization, the social organization itself needs to be capable of generating common interests, and we need to be able to think of divergent individual interests, not as conflicting, but as differences in function. The test for national mindedness, then, is whether the community can identify its common interests and bring these to
the fore in addressing disputes. If it can, the community will be able to settle its quarrels civilly and not via physical force.\textsuperscript{79}

We do not now have such a national \textit{mind}, Mead claims, the kind of mind that nations need in order for a League of Nations or a Kellogg-Briand Pact to work. The use of violence in settling intra-national disputes is the indicator that we have not achieved national-mindedness. In the 1920s racial and labor tensions were rife, and protestors were quickly labeled as Bolsheviks and thereby silenced.\textsuperscript{80} Mead claims that as long as the nation responds to labor unrest by calling out the military, it cannot claim to be nationally-minded.\textsuperscript{81}

There is also our national mythology, how our sense of national pride and honor are confirmed by our willingness to fight.\textsuperscript{82} Mead connects this to the Monroe Doctrine, which in 1928 got some messy publicity as a number of Latin American countries asserted their grave displeasure at the Doctrine, and especially at the U.S.’s practice of defining and applying it unilaterally. Now, in 1929, Mead claims that the U.S.’s continued insistence on the Monroe Doctrine indicates that the U.S. is still seeking unity based on the fighting spirit, and not on a national mind. Mead wryly notes, “None are agreed upon what the doctrine is . . . No, it is something—no matter what it is—for which we will \textit{fight} . . . We must be of one mind about it, for it is impossible to have different minds about that which no one can comprehend. The only issue involved in the Monroe Doctrine is this, are you a patriot, are you a red-blooded American, or are you a mollycoddle?”\textsuperscript{83}

The real reason, Mead claims, why the U.S. holds tight to the Monroe Doctrine in spite of its unintelligibility, is that the U.S. sees the Doctrine as the final indicator for national honor and national self-respect. Mead interprets this as reflecting a sense of national insecurity. If a nation were secure in itself, it could then approach negotiating both internal and international disputes without needing the threat of violence to back itself up. Mead thinks the Kellogg-Briand Peace Pact and the League of Nations take us half-way. The other thing that is needed is a secure national-mindedness in the sense of trusting adjudication over force. He ends the essay by declaring, “We will get rid of the mechanism of warfare only as our common life permits the individual to identify his own ends and purposes with those of the community of which he is a part and which has endowed him with a self.”\textsuperscript{84}

I do not know how much Mead’s new appraisal of the Monroe Doctrine merely reflected widespread changes in public opinion or whether it indicates a change in his internationalism. In either case, Mead’s exploration in this essay is remarkable. Most discussions of the national mind in the post-war years centered on the question of what constitutes a nation by examining the significance of race, language, shared culture, and so on.\textsuperscript{85} Mead bypasses that discussion altogether. In his own way Mead has come to one of Addams’ main themes in \textit{Newer Ideals of}
Peace, that eliminating internal violence is an essential dimension of achieving international peace. I wish Mead had continued his thinking about violence, and had drawn out more thoroughly the implications for the international mind. I wish he had explored more deeply how violence fractures communities and fractures selves. I wish he had placed his theory of the generalized other next to DuBois's "double-consciousness," where the generalized other that DuBois internalizes is full of contempt.86 I would like to see Mead interacting with contemporaries such as Kallen, Jacks, and Mecklin, who theorized the international mind more directly than Mead.87 He died too soon.

This paper is as much about the need to locate political and philosophical rhetoric, as it is an examination of Mead's thinking. "International mind," "enlarged mentality," "universal religion," and other phrases that Mead used were culturally laden terms. To understand what Mead meant by those terms, we need to place his writings in close conversation with a range of his own contemporaries, as well as with canonical philosophers.

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REFERENCES


NOTES

1. Knock, To End All Wars, Chapter 13.


16. This assumption is implicit in Butler's discussion of the Agadir affair. See *The International Mind* 99.


23. For the German point of view, see Delbrück, "Germany's Answer;" also Russell, "An Appeal to Intellectuals." In May 1915 Addams and Hamilton met with citizens and with heads of state and foreign ministers from both the Central Powers and the Triple Entente, all of whom claimed that their respective countries acted in self-defense. See *Women at The Hague*, Chapters 2 and 3.

24. Mead, "Psychological Basis," 604; L.P. Jacks observed this phenomenon in England during the early months of the war. See "The Peacefulness of Being at War."


26. In "Social Psychology as Counterpart to Physiological Psychology" (1909) Mead refers to work by McDougall and others on primitive instincts and impulses.
and discusses how these instincts are stimulated in response to the gestures of others. See 97–101.


30. This point was also commonly made at the time. See Bender, A Nation Among Nations, Chapter 5, on the international character of social reform movements.

32. Mead, "Psychological Basis," 606, 607; For analyses of Roosevelt's masculinist imagery see Bederman, Manliness and Civilization, Chapter 6.
36. Knock, *To End All Wars* 50.
38. Marburg, "The League to Enforce Peace," 51; Knock, *To End All Wars* 55–58; on Mead's membership in the League to Enforce Peace see Rucker, 21.

39. Mead makes the point that U.S. participation in international affairs depended on its access to the seas. With Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare, the U.S.'s options were to fight for the right of continued international engagement or to acquiesce into isolation. See "War Issue to U.S. Forced by Kaiser." Also, "America's Ideals and the War."

42. Mead, "America's Ideals and the War." In an unpublished manuscript on colonization in Hawaii, Mead encouraged American farmers to settle there. After discussing the potential for various crops on the islands, he concludes the essay by stating, "It (the Hawaiian territory) needs American men to roll back the tide of oriental population which has threatened to take possession of this gateway to our western coast. Hawaii lies at the cross-roads of the Pacific. The power that holds Hawaii commands the western coast of the continent and has the only base of supply for over 2000 miles. The East and the West have met in Hawaii and thanks to the vigor of Americans it still belongs to the nation who must own it. It needs to be occupied still more completely by Americans who can adapt themselves to the Islands in order to possess them" (22–23).

43. Murphy, Hemispheric Imaginings, viii–ix, 4–6, 14.
44. Roosevelt, "Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine"; See also Dawley, *Changing the World*, 79; and Whitaker, "The U.S. in Latin America to 1933: An Overview," 326.

45. See Dawley, Changing the World, Chapter 3.
47. On the Woman’s Peace Party’s protests against U.S. intervention in the Caribbean and Mexico, see Degen, *The History of the Woman’s Peace Party*, 168–173. McDowell, Helen Mead, and Dr. Myrna Mead are listed as members of the Chicago branch. See Woman’s Peace Party Microfilm, Reel 3. Knock claims there is strong evidence that interventions by the Woman’s Peace Party and the American Union Against Militarism, were crucial toward keeping Wilson from going to war with Mexico in 1916. See *To End All Wars*, 82.


49. *Mind, Self, and Society* was published posthumously and carries a 1934 copyright date. Much, but not all of the material is based on lectures Mead gave in 1927. I hypothesize that the passages I work with are from 1927 lecture notes. After the events of 1928, Mead would not have referred to the Monroe Doctrine in the way he does in the portion of the text I use.


55. See, for example, Kallen, “The International Mind,” 58; Addams, *Long Road of Woman’s Memory*, 59–60.


62. For a discussion of how imperialism and colonization were integral parts of the development of England’s cotton industry, see Marks, *The Origin of the Modern World*, Chapter 4.


65. Mead defines impulses or attitudes as “fundamental socio-physiological impulses or behavior tendencies which are common to all human individuals.” *Mind, Self, and Society* 303; 290, 258, 272.

66. Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society*, 302, 281–82, 293; Mead does not mention counter-examples. I don’t know if he was aware of how Charlemagne used his sword and cross campaigns to conquer Europe, or of how many North Africans, weary of corrupt Byzantine rule, welcomed the Muslims as they moved westward.


medicine, and became the first woman professor at Harvard Medical School. She was a founding member of the Woman's Peace Party and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and remained a pacifist throughout the war.

70. Mead, _Mind, Self, and Society_, 287.
72. Walters, _A History of the League of Nations_, 402–406; Swanwick, _Collective Insecurity_.
73. Knock, _To End All Wars_, 210–214; Macmillan, _Paris 1919_, Chapter 8.
75. On secret treaties see Dawley, _Changing the World_, 177; Knock, _To End All Wars_, 138; Macmillan, _Paris 1919_, 105.
76. Russell, "Is a Permanent Peace Possible?" 368.
77. Walters, _A History of the League of Nations_, 387.
80. Dawley, _Changing the World_, 160–161, 260; Addams was under government surveillance and charged with being a Bolshevik, see Davis, _American Heroine_, 251–254.
82. Pillsbury, in _The Psychology of Nationality and Internationalism_, uses national honor in conceptualizing what constitutes a nation. He states that having a sense of national honor is the test of whether immigrants have accepted their adopted nation as truly theirs. See 216–217.
85. For post-war writings on the national mind see e.g., Pillsbury, _The Psychology of Nationality and Internationalism_, Zimmern, "Nationalism and Internationalism," and McDougall, _The Group Mind_, Chapters 6–7.
86. DuBois, _The Souls of Black Folk_, Chapter 1.