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Sketches from the Urban Internationale, 1910[–]50. Guardian Angels of the City: Voluntary Associations, International Institutions and US Philanthropy\*

PIERRE-YVES SAUNIER

You are from France, Germany, Great Britain and Holland; you have come from farther afield: from Italy, Spain, Russia and Scandinavia; and from farther still: from North and South America, from Japan and China, from Egypt and from southern Africa. All of you fulfil similar functions in the cities [–] be they large, medium-sized or small [–] where you have been entrusted with the exercise of local public office; functions for which the citizens who live in the community of urban centres have made you responsible: to watch over their safety and their health, the prosperity of their affairs, the education of their children and the enjoyment of their leisure pursuits. You have come together to deliberate for several days on the major problems that arise from the universal nature of the conditions of present-day life, which are more or less the same everywhere (Union Internationale des Villes, 1913: 1).

With these words, the Burgomaster of Ghent, Emile Braun, welcomed delegates to the International Congress of Cities at his Town Hall on Sunday 27 July 1913. Although he placed deliberate emphasis on the far-flung origins of the delegates, there were, in fact, few visitors from a great distance away; but he does give us a clear indication of the conviction, shared by the meeting's organizers, that urban problems were universal and could be solved through international cooperation. It was nothing exceptional to summon together people from all over the world who were concerned with the urban phenomenon. Since the mid-nineteenth century, particularly in the wake of the great universal exhibitions, there had been a growing number of international congresses on different themes, for different professions and focusing on different problems.[u]1[ux] This internationalization [–] which could either precede or follow formal expressions at a national level of the themes, professions or problems under consideration [–] was not a simple consequence of a universal object 'appearing on the scene'. It made a powerful contribution to defining the themes or problems concerned, making them into objects worthy of interest and determining how they would be approached, perceived and resolved.

This article will offer a rudimentary tour of the international milieu that was dedicated to the study of issues relating to cities. It marks one stage of some research in progress and, as such, it gives priority to structures, setting aside for the time being individuals and informal networks within this international sphere of the urban. The early twentieth century[u]2[ux] was the moment when this sphere began to be organized, in the context of the challenges and promises of 'a society on the way to urbanization', a definition captured here and there in statistics, which sought to be both objective and revealing.[u]3[ux] Not that there had been any lack of travel and meetings before then, traffic in people and books, and dissemination of ideas and drawings. One only has to look at the history of the urban reform movement in the United States for evidence of this.[u]4[ux] People like Edward M. Hartnell, Charles M. Robinson, Frederic Howe, Jane Addams, Daniel Burnham and many others travelled all over Europe without any specialist organizations devoted to defining, studying or solving the problems of the city. The history of the movement for working-class housing is also one of such exchanges, which remained informal for a long time.[u]5[ux]

However, a specific feature of the early years of the twentieth century was the proliferation of occasions and institutions dedicated to the study of the urban phenomenon, as Helen Meller has shown in relation to the town-planning movement;[u]6[ux] and, as this

flowering progressed, the period from 1910 onwards saw the international sphere of the urban becoming increasingly organized. The international itinerary followed by devotees of urban issues was less determined by personal networks or by exhibitions and conferences organized by countries or cities (here we should note the 1903[---]12 series of German meetings and the 1905[---]13 Belgian series). Instead, they more often tended to meet regularly under the auspices of specialist organizations. These gradually took the form of permanent associations; they set up conferences and exhibitions, published journals and created information departments. This evolutionary trend towards organization, which went hand in hand with specialization in issues such as housing, urban development and local government, was interrupted by the outbreak of the first world war [---] although it was a trend eventually reinforced by the conflict. This was because, internationally as well as within national spaces, the pressures of the first world war promoted thinking about the organization and rationalization of work and space, about the efficiency of production and government and about how to establish stable peace, both between social classes and between nations. Through the political institutions that it generated (the foremost being the League of Nations), the war actually created structures that would provide an official, legitimate, political, bureaucratic response to concerns that had previously been voiced only within coterie circles of philanthropists, scholars, technical experts and elected politicians. This movement continued during the interwar period, and then accelerated when the second world war led to a redefinition of the world order, both economically and politically, and to the strengthening of international organizations within the framework of the new United Nations Organization.

This structural change does not seem to be a natural consequence of technology enlarging the space available for travel or the spaces in which information could be disseminated across the major transatlantic telephone or telegraph lines, nor to represent an 'automatic response' to the urbanization common to the economic spaces of the North Atlantic. Rather, this international outpouring in the early twentieth century resulted from the unceasing activity of 'men of goodwill' who chose the city as object of and territory for their cause, in their respective countries and internationally. The Belgians Paul Otlet and Emile Vinck, the Scot Patrick Geddes and the French socialists Albert Thomas and Henri Sellier were first involved in structuring what we might call 'the international sphere of the urban'. Subsequently, their wishes were sustained and then surpassed by a general movement throughout the industrialized western world: a movement embarking on the difficult but conscious search for an economic and political world order, increasing the social and geographical division of labour, pushing forward the logics of rationalization and of professionalization [---] a whole set of phenomena, of which the city seemed to be both cause and manifestation.

This was the context within which an international sphere of the urban was established [---] an 'Urban Internationale'. This article proposes to map the main contours of this world, viewing it firstly [---] for our purposes [---] as a place of symbolic power: in other words, an environment where ways of judging, apprehending and acting on the city were defined, where expertise and professional legitimacies were created, where knowledge and disciplines were constructed, and where the profiles of politicians responsible for urban issues were modified. This Internationale had several particular features related to the urban object that formed its main concern. First of all, its themes and structures were fragmentary, since issues connected with the urban are more than usually labile, and can cover leisure as well as work, the development of the urban fabric as well as administrative organization, forms of democracy as well as workers' housing. Consequently, the Internationale brought together individuals and structures from different worlds and cultures: those in government, both officials and elected representatives; scientists, lawyers and prime movers in the nascent social sciences; [u]7[ux] reformers, rich amateurs and tireless philanthropists [---] whether of the

usual kind or those who pursued their interest full-time; technical experts and architects who played the principal roles in the town planning movement, *urbanisme* or *Städtebau*. The city belongs to everyone: it is a place where people come into contact and where everyone tries to read the future of human societies. This means that everyone has something at stake there and hence that control of institutions concerned with the city becomes itself a major stake in the game. The Urban Internationale, moreover, was a place of struggle for definition of objects, methods, tools and competent people to think about and act on the city. The ‘struggle for definition’ phenomenon was made much more complex by the international nature of the milieu in this case: not only [---] as in national spheres of the urban [---] were professions, interests and individuals in conflict or in harmony, but there was also a set of ways of seeing and organizing the world, solidified into what are known as ‘national traditions’, of which language is both the expression and the basis. Therefore, the phenomena of translation and equivalence are important in this world, because they involve, over and above language itself, all that language carries with it, in terms of technical or professional definitions, ways of posing problems and fundamental trends. Finally, this Urban Internationale was an expanding geographical milieu, and was therefore unstable: North American circles were the first to form around the European core groups, followed by South Americans in the 1920s and 1930s, and then by Asians and Africans after the second world war. This raised the stakes as far as the issue of language was concerned, but it also meant that issues of influence, of the circulation of models, of the formation of elites in the sphere of the urban and of the cultural imposition of particular ways of seeing and dealing with ‘urban problems’ could be contextualized and then tackled. The Internationale was where differing concepts and definitions of the city as a universal phenomenon came face to face.

For the purposes of this article, the Urban Internationale will be shown as structured around three areas of focus that stand out, in the sense that their relationships and their respective positions seem to give shape to the whole. These are, firstly, international associations created around some aspects of ‘urban problems’; secondly, international organizations that took an interest in all or part of the Internationale; and, lastly, major North American philanthropic foundations, which became involved on a number of occasions. Of course, none of these areas of focus is either monolithic or homogeneous; and all of them are shot through with cleavages [---] national, cultural, organizational etc. [---] which will be merely touched upon here. However, this presentation may be able to indicate some lines of future development in mapping the results of this research.

### **‘Men of Goodwill’**

The title of Jules Romain’s *roman-fleuve* is used here to indicate, above all, the associative, unpaid and voluntary nature of the organizations that will be discussed in this section. The list of such organizations would be a long one, if it were to include all those associations with international memberships that were concerned at some time or other with issues relating to urban housing, urban development or urban government. The Association Générale des Techniciens et Hygiénistes Municipaux, created in 1905 (Claude, 1989), the International Institute of Administrative Sciences, which originated in 1910, the Standing Committee of the International Housing Congresses, organized by these Congresses from 1889 onwards, the International Congresses of Public Art (of which there were four between 1898 and 1910) (Smets, 1995), the International City Managers Association, which developed during the 1920s (Stillman, 1974), and even organizations such as the International Association of Road Congresses or the International Committee for Scientific Management are all worthy of attention. So, the primacy given here to two associations, the Union Internationale des Villes

(UIV) and the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Association (later the International Garden Cities and Town Planning Federation and then the International Federation for Housing and Town Planning, or IF), should not be taken to imply their exclusive status, but as a convenient way of getting right to the heart of the Urban Internationale, since these two associations had ambitions to define its structure. To achieve this, some facts about these associations will be followed by an outline of some of the main trends that marked their history.

### *Some facts*

These associations were contemporaneous, both having been launched in 1913 [---] the UIV following the Congress of Ghent and the IF at a meeting in Paris.[u]8[ux] Both of them have lasted through the twentieth century to the present day, generating congresses, meetings and publications at a more or less regular rate. The IF organized 17 congresses between 1913 and 1948; the UIV, 8 congresses and several meetings or thematic conferences. Mapping the places where these congresses took place leads to a preliminary observation: the IF moved twice within the American continent and also went to Gothenburg, Vienna and Prague, thus displaying more far-reaching international coverage than the UIV, which confined its activities to western Europe. In addition, their lists of publications were impressive. Apart from putting out congress documents in several languages, the two societies published reference works, such as the IF *Glossary*[u]9[ux] or the UIV yearbook (Joint Committee on Planning and Cooperation, 1936), technical reports and, of course, periodicals. The latter were something of an exploit in themselves [---] but are too much to go into here. It should simply be noted that their frequent changes of title and breaks in publication demonstrate how difficult it was to keep them in production. Perhaps the number of members and their subscriptions were not enough to support the publication of a periodical?

In actual fact, the strength of the associations is a fairly tricky issue, since there are no membership lists,[u]10[ux] and estimates are made more difficult by the nature of membership. This is particularly true of the IF, which [---] as a federation [---] comprised individuals as well as associations or institutions. So, when the National Association of Operative Plasterers joins the IF in July 1936, should all its members be counted individually? In addition, deliberately or perforce, the IF had difficulty counting its individual members.[u]11[ux] The UIV had the same problem, since its members included cities, municipal services, intermediate bodies such as French *départements* and English counties, and national unions of cities. In 1926, the UIV boasted of bringing together 52,000 cities in 30 different countries. But how strong was their participation in the UIV's activities? Moreover, although only local government bodies could be 'real' members, other membership categories were open to individuals or to associations. So far, then, it is difficult to draw any conclusions. No more is to be gained by approaching the issue through Congress participation, since, on the one hand, extra places were given to nationals of the country where the meeting was held and, on the other, there may be a great deal of uncertainty about the actual rate of attendance. So, how many of the 460 members at the 1924 Amsterdam Congress, of some 2,000 members at the 1925 New York Congress or of the 3,200 people registered for the 1931 Berlin meeting really attended?[u]12[ux] Internal IF reports suggest 500 in New York and 1,000 in Berlin. But which ones? And how many of them converted their Congress attendance into membership of the IF? One thing is certain, however: participants and audiences at Congresses increased steadily over the period as a whole, as did membership of the associations. Rituals were created, relationships between individuals developed (Saunier, 1999), and a community was established, along with a small-scale, internal bureaucracy.

Under these conditions, the best way of finding out more about the strength of these societies may be to take an approach based on their financial situations. Some first impressions can be gleaned from correspondence between officers and members of our two societies. Once the turmoil of the first world war [---] which both associations somehow or other survived [---] had passed, these situations fluctuated. Although the nature of their funding was different, with the UIV receiving public subsidies and the IF having to make do with money from members, they both seem to have existed on a knife-edge. The IF's profit margins and volume of subscriptions, for example, fell continuously from 1929 to 1935,[u]13[ux] and donations from certain members became a common outward sign of the organization's difficulties. For the UIV, the balance during the 1920s was a fragile one: in 1924, according to Vinck [---] as reported by a member of the American municipal movement [---] the UIV was only 5,000 Belgian francs in the black, despite receipts of 111,270, while a loss of 14,000 Belgian francs on receipts of 143,000 was being forecast for 1925.[u]14[ux] Only the massive rise in German and American subscriptions after 1934 put the UIV in a relatively comfortable position. It took only a planned congress to fall though [---] as was the case for the IF with the failure of its Boston meeting in the early 1930s [---] for the budget to be in jeopardy. Accounts for 1929, 1930 and 1931, sent to the IF President by its staff, show that income from congresses was by far the largest source of revenue. No congress took place in 1930, and income in that year was one third lower than in each of the other two years, when congresses took place in Rome and Berlin.[u]15[ux] Clearly, this situation made it vital to organize a congress regularly, quite apart from any scientific considerations.

### *Sibling rivalry*

This tension made coexistence between the two associations more difficult. Their potential audience was broadly overlapping. Of course, one seems to have been intended mainly for elected politicians and staff from local authorities, and the other for issue specialists and amateurs [---] the garden city and town planning zealots. But a closer look reveals that the same people and the same organizations were very often to be found in them. In the first place, their most senior dignitaries included many who were involved (successively or simultaneously) in running both societies. This was true of Emile Vinck, Auguste Brüggeman, G. Montagu Harris and Henri Sellier [---] to name only the key figures. The broad memberships of the associations, too, were often duplicated, or at least intersecting. Thus, the City of Strasbourg joined the UIV, while its Municipal Works Department was in the IF, and the Belgian *Union des Villes et Communes*, which was at the centre of the UIV, was a member of the IF too. A more detailed analysis of attendance at congresses or an exercise to piece together the networks mobilized by institutions and bodies involved in the two societies would probably lead to the same conclusion: that the two organizations reached the same audience, a world where elected politicians, scholars, amateurs, technical experts and all those for whom the city was a favoured object of curiosity and reforming zeal met and mingled. This also meant that 'neighbour relations' between our two organizations were unstable, since each of them was permanently encroaching on its neighbour's territory, yet still obliged to define its own specific features and anxious about ensuring its continued existence. Consequently, their relationship went through several forms. Sometimes it was cooperative: here, we should note the work done in England during the first world war, when Belgian exiles and English planners worked together under the aegis of the UIV, the IF and the British Town Planning Institute,[u]16[ux] or the linked congresses in Amsterdam in 1924. By contrast, one can only describe relations as vindictive when looking at the role played by several senior UIV dignitaries (most prominent among whom were Wibaut, Vinck and Sellier) in the serious internal conflict that shook the IF between 1926 and 1938 around the issue of housing and the existence of the International Housing Association, whose

headquarters were in Frankfurt. However, this quick sketch must end with the *rapprochement* of 1938--40 and the period after 1950, when the two associations shared staff and premises, first in Brussels and then in the Netherlands, in response to requirements for cooperation introduced by their new US partners [---] of whom more will be said later.

These difficult relations derived in part from the relative similarity of the two associations' 'markets', but were also affected by their differing organizational structures. Firstly, the two associations used different forms of government, with the IF functioning in a collegiate manner and the UIV seeming to depend more on the activity of one man [---] the Belgian senator Emile Vinck, who was the UIV's pivotal figure from its creation until 1948. More generally, it also seems that the IF based its decision-making process on consensus-seeking, while UIV debates were resolved through majority voting.[u]17[ux] At the same time, this difference may be traced back to the roots of the two societies. The UIV originated within the sphere of local politics and was run by prominent figures in the European socialist movement, such as the Dutchman Wibaut, the Belgian Vinck and the Frenchman Sellier. Even though the UIV recruited from beyond the ranks of socialist sympathizers, we should note its links to the 1900 International Socialist Congress with its stated desire to achieve socialism and internationalism through local councils. In addition, as Helen Meller has shown, the creation of the UIV should be seen in the general context of the movement for peace and international cooperation, as illustrated in particular by the role of the Belgian Paul Otlet. The IF, although it was involved in the same socialist and pacifist milieu,[u]18[ux] very soon took on propagandist, scientific and didactic colours, strongly favouring architects, planners and other technical experts fired with the ardour of scientific objectivity. These differences were also revealed through the ways in which meetings were organized: UIV Congresses seem to have been more frivolous, at least in the sense that their publicity put more emphasis on recreational events and social networks; while the IF, from the beginning, placed stress on study visits and set up long, exhaustive planning tours, in the tradition of those instigated by the British garden city movement. Finally, differences between the centres and circles of power in the two associations are worth looking at more deeply. The IF had a strongly British flavour because it was based in London until 1938, and [---] although there was a break from 1938 to 1944 while the executive was controlled by the Germans [---] this distinctive trait was lost only after 1949. Moreover, this British domination was one of the causes of internal conflict around the issue of housing that led to the creation of the International Housing Association.[u]19[ux] The UIV, on the other hand, had its headquarters in Brussels and was based on a continental European network with anchor points in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Switzerland and Germany. Its executive was dominated by elected politicians from various countries. These differences brought into play not only national rivalries, but also different concepts of what might be an area of discussion, and divergence on the nature and role of various contributors to the urban scene and even on the definition of a city. They should also not be forgotten in considering the post-second world war period, when American pressure united the destinies of the two associations and tried to hush up internal cleavages. This was the result of the role of the major American philanthropic foundations, which [---] however 'a-national' they wanted to be [---] must also be seen as attempting to define the general interest, to define the universal at the same time as developing values and forms that would be valid in and for the American context. This is a point that we will now dwell on briefly.

**Efficiency and expertise: from Carnegie to Ford [---] the activities of the major American foundations**

The history of the major American foundations' presence in the affairs of the Urban Internationale cannot be traced simply through the involvement of US nationals in the Internationale. As membership of the main associations discussed above illustrates, American individuals and organizations were present from the mid-1920s. The interest of figures such as John Nolen or Lawrence Veiller in international exchanges, the IF Congress in New York in 1925 and the affiliation of several American organizations to the IF are all manifestations of this involvement. In addition, Emile Vinck, Director of the UIV, was always concerned to enlarge the UIV's scope into North America, and his efforts were rewarded in 1925 when the city of Lawrence, the American Municipal Association and the International City Managers' Association joined the UIV. However, it would be the intervention of an American foundation that, from the mid-1930s, gave this US presence a consistency it had not previously had. From then on, American activities within the Urban Internationale were connected with a conscious, organized desire for worldwide dissemination of ways of seeing, thinking about and managing the city that suited the American liberal project. Here we are witnessing a symbolic conquest of the world of the urban, carried forward in the name of the universal. The intervention of the major foundations, bearers of a certain definition of an American ideal applied both inside and outside the United States, can be presented here through three examples, which varied in their intensity and effect.

#### *Carnegie and world peace*

Organizations created by Andrew Carnegie had an indirect influence on the first formal manifestations of the Urban Internationale. This was because the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace gave financial support to the Association of International Organizations, of which Paul Otlet was Secretary. This association participated in the far-reaching movement that brought together the search for peace and the search for knowledge, in which young Belgian socialist lawyers (La Fontaine, Vinck, Otlet) were prime movers from the late 1890s, with the support of the Belgian industrialist Solvay (Rasmussen, 1995). The creation of, in turn, the Union of International Organizations, the International Congress of Administrative Sciences and the UIV were a part of this bigger picture, even though they established a 'scientific divisions' approach to the work of knowledge-building and international cooperation (Payre, 1998). The Carnegie money, which [---] according to Helen Meller (1995a) [---] came in from 1910 onwards, was used to set up the Congress of Ghent, and made it possible to develop the municipal aspect of the grand design of Otlet, Vinck and their like. It represented a direct intervention on the part of an American Foundation, within the framework of action for peace, in the form of comprehensive funding. Further work needs to be done to clarify the kind of relationship the Carnegie Endowment had with Otlet's group and to gauge the reaction of financial backers to this urban, municipal variation of the movement for peace and cooperation; but, for the time being, let us accept this as setting the first, fairly flexible pattern of American philanthropic intervention, in the form of personal devotion to a 'cause'. The activities of the Rockefeller organizations, on the other hand, were quite different.

#### *Rockefeller and the efficient world*

In order to assess the involvement of the galaxy of Rockefeller philanthropic organizations in the Urban Internationale, a detour into America itself is required. The Rockefeller Foundation was a decisive supporter of certain ventures into municipal reform in New York and across America. One of its most notable activities was funding the Bureau of City Betterment and its successors, the New York Bureau of Municipal Research (Kahn, 1997) and the Institute of Public Administration. The Foundation, through its Special Committee on Scientific Research in Governmental Problems, signalled a general interest in matters of importance to



government: rational, efficient administration, able to respond to 'social issues', was at the heart of the Foundation's world view. After the war, this interest became broader, both geographically and in subject-matter. On the basis of America's new position in a world shattered by global war, the Rockefeller organizations became concerned with finding solutions to the problems of this chaotic world and with strengthening the position of America in the world. The potential order of things was to be inspired by lessons drawn from the American experience. Therefore, the forms taken by the international interests of the major American foundations changed. As Barry Karl has suggested :

Philanthropists were willing enough, some of them, to subscribe to peace movements in the earlier phase of their international interest; but by the 1920's they were concerned with practical, long-range aims to benefit American agriculture and to find markets for American industrial products. That American industrial skills would be useful for the development of new industrial societies and the modernization of older ones was part of the belief held by E. A. Filene and other social Taylorites of the twenties who supported Herbert Hoover in his belief that good business was good philanthropy, and vice versa (1974: 182).

The 'project' of the Rockefeller philanthropic organizations fell within this general context, reflecting a desire to promote efficient management of human societies and their activities, to the shared advantage of the United States, peace and prosperity (including the prosperity of major financial and industrial companies). After the war, the various Rockefeller organizations invested internationally. Their large-scale activities in the sphere of medicine can be seen in their support for the activities of the League of Nations' Health Organization or their direct support of hospital-building (at Lyons, for example). Their interest in the internationalization of social sciences with practical applications is well-known, and was demonstrated in their support for economics, sociology and political science.[u]20[ux] It was through this area of interest that the Rockefeller organizations, via the Spelman Fund of New York, came to be involved in the Urban Internationale. The key to this enterprise, which continued from the mid-1920s until just after the second world war, is provided by the names of individuals. Beardsley Ruml and Guy Moffett, Charles E. Merriam and Louis Brownlow were the linchpins of these activities. The first two, who followed each other as officials of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial fund, which became the Spelman Fund of New York in 1928, personify the Rockefeller aim of exercising philanthropy on an international level, alongside its plan for a peaceful, efficient world. Their collaboration with Charles E. Merriam, Professor of Political Sciences at the University of Chicago, former militant of municipal reform, President of the American Association of Political Science and co-founder of the Social Science Research Council, provided them with an intellectual weapon in this quest. Louis Brownlow, former journalist and former city manager,[u]21[ux] who had mixed in housing reform circles[u]22[ux] and worked alongside Woodrow Wilson as Commissioner of the District of Columbia, acted as go-between for this group with practitioners in public administration. Together, from 1928 onwards, they systematized and internationalized the Spelman Fund's activities around public administration issues.[u]23[ux]

The Spelman Fund-Merriam-Brownlow 'Connection' became concrete in 1930, in the shape of the Public Administration Clearing House (PACH), a Chicago-based organization that aimed 'to serve the exchange of information concerning administrative processes in government and to foster cooperation among organizations of operating officials, research units, technical experts, and others, in the field of public administration'. [u]24[ux] To be more precise, PACH had a number of aims. It intended not only to promote dissemination of information and exchanges between different groups involved in public administration issues,

but also to act as research department and main organizational structure for the major practical project fostered by the Spelman Fund-Merriam-Brownlow 'Connection', which was to bring together in Chicago [---] under one roof and sharing services [---] the largest possible number of associations connected with this field. Louis Brownlow was the Executive Director of PACH from 1930 to 1945 and, thanks to the joint backing of the University of Chicago and the Spelman Fund, succeeded in attracting existing associations to Chicago and in creating new organizations there in various sectors of public administration.[u]25[ux] By 1935, 18 associations were all based at 850 E 58th Street, before moving in the early 1940s to a building entirely financed by the Spelman Fund, at 1313 E 60th Street. At the same time as accomplishing this conquest of America, PACH was also conquering the world.

Those who had conceived the project all shared the same faith in the virtues of international exchange. Persuaded that America should spread the gospel of the new social sciences, government efficiency and expertise to the world, and also concerned to draw on what the Old World could still teach the young American power, the 'Connection men' travelled the world and sent others to do the same.[u]26[ux] After the maiden voyages of Louis Brownlow, Charles Merriam et Beardsley Ruml to Europe in 1930, other people connected with PACH and with Chicago-based organizations followed them. PACH and the University of Chicago invited many Europeans to travel in the opposite direction, including the English civil servants Bunbury and Gibbon, the International Labour Office officials Fuss and Von Haan, the Belgian reformers Vinck and Diddisheim, the Dutchman Von Leyden, the Swedish municipal official Larsson, and others. In fact, PACH's travels had enabled it to identify the most suitable associations and individuals to take on and spread the 'Connection' project abroad. Subsequently, PACH, its subsidiary associations, the University of Chicago and the Spelman Fund collaborated to bring them together, invite them to the United States for tours lasting several weeks, and to initiate projects in Europe.

Our Urban Internationale associations were at the heart of the international 'Connection' project. On his first trip, Louis Brownlow had identified the UIV, the IF, the International Housing Association and the International Institute of Administrative Sciences as the European links in the chain of a venture, starting in the United States, around the theme of public administration. Indeed, the issues of local government, town planning and housing were at the heart of PACH's special interests. At first, from 1930 to 1932, the 'Connection men' joined the societies concerned, developed an American section, attended Congresses and formed ties, all thanks to the Spelman Funds, which financed visits via PACH. Then came the time for an initiative with a single goal: to unify the work of European-based associations, instil in them American methods and concepts, promote a professional, expert view of local government, and spread these values throughout the world. These efforts were crowned with success: in 1938, the UIV, the IF and the International Institute of Administrative Sciences set up a joint department in Brussels, and the first Pan-American Intermunicipal Conference took place in Chicago in 1939.

These successes resulted from the multifaceted work that had started in 1932. Speeches at congresses, exchange visits, cash help from the Rockefeller Foundation (direct funding or wages paid to Americans in charge of modernizing European structures and methods) gradually brought the European associations closer to what the Americans wanted. The 'Connection men' fairly soon decided that the associations were ready to become the autonomous centres of expertise and service provision that Rockefeller philanthropy was doing its best to create. From the late 1930s, the Chicagoans also considered affiliating the UIV and the IF to international organizations [---] the International Labour Office and the League of Nations. Disrupted by the war, this project was taken up again in 1945; it was then made much easier by the fact that people involved in the 'Connection' had gone into Federal organizations created in the United States by the New Deal or during the war, and were thus

at the heart of the machine where the new institutions of the world order, the UN and UNESCO, were being invented. Charles S. Ascher (1899[–]1980) provides a good illustration of this. Secretary and consultant to Alexander Bing's City Housing Corporation, who led the Sunnyside Gardens and Radburn ventures, and Executive Secretary of PACH (1930[–]42), he was Regional Director of the National Housing Agency from 1942 to 1947, before becoming adviser to the first Director of UNESCO and going on to occupy important posts in that body. His activities and those of his companions were aimed at reviving the international organizations that had previously been linked to PACH, while preventing them from becoming national monopolies[u]27[ux] and continuing to reform them using methods proven in the 1930s. As Charles Ascher himself said, the time for recruiting men of goodwill had passed [–] it was time to build an NGO on the foundation of the national sections.[u]28[ux] This was made possible only by a new source of funding (which came piecemeal from the Ford Foundation), since the Spelman Fund was wound up and stopped its payments in 1949.

#### *The Ford Foundation: philanthropy to the rescue*

Unlike the organizations that had intervened earlier, the Ford Foundation did not originate on the East coast; it was also more recent in origin.[u]29[ux] Although the Fund was set up in the late 1930s, it was only in 1950 that its first action programme was published and that the Foundation gained an executive. Those involved in PACH were able to use all their experience to get in on this programme, which followed the main lines of American bureaucratic philanthropy. Thus, the first Ford International Program listed as its goals: the establishment of peace, strengthening democracy and the economy, education, and improved scientific knowledge of individual behaviour and human relations. All these were familiar themes in the rhetoric and objectives of PACH, long since broken in by the Rockefeller experience.

As early as 1949, in fact, PACH had produced two reports for the Ford Foundation, one of which analysed a proposal from the Union of International Associations (Paul Otlet's old creation) to establish a joint centre for international NGOs. Even more conducive to success was the fact that the President of the Ford Foundation, elected by the trustees in 1950, was a member of PACH's Board of Trustees. Better still, the top staff director of the Foundation, to whom the President left the field clear, was Robert Maynard Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago [–] and also a PACH trustee. Thus, a preliminary grant (which PACH's internal accounts describe as 'unsolicited') was made to PACH in 1950, to enable it to extend its national and international activities[u]30[ux] Seizing this opportunity, Ascher and Emmerich (new PACH Director, since Brownlow's departure in 1945) decided to put the grant into developing operations 'into the international organization and national-international aspects of international administration'. [u]31[ux] The plan was to work towards setting up a strong, efficient international administration, by giving the new international bodies resources for their activities [–] in particular, by reproducing the PACH system on an international scale. This meant strengthening advisory and expert bodies, and this, in turn, would be achieved through re-establishing a strong joint centre for the UIV, the IF and the IAS. A first grant of \$500,000 in 1950 and a second of \$675,000 in 1952 allowed PACH to sustain this ambition. Through direct financial support (between 1951 and 1955, the IAS received \$7,200 from its American section, which was directed by PACH people), through organizing visits and through creating a New York office for PACH's international work, directed by Rowland Egger, PACH was able to re-establish its Urban Internationale networks. Its activities were all the more effective because, unlike their predecessors in the 1930s, they were now able to rely on rich international organizations that profited from American influence.

## The world order

Philanthropic and associative factors marked the birth of the Urban Internationale, but the first world war introduced a new actor, in the shape of institutions produced by the desire to see the world order governed by an authoritative international body. The history of the League of Nations has some connections with circles we have already come across. Plans for a League of Nations had long been debated at the Universal Peace Congresses organized by the International Peace Bureau, the oldest pacifist organization in the world, founded in 1891; and its President in 1919 was none other than Henri La Fontaine, a Belgian companion of Emile Vinck and Paul Otlet and, like them, an apostle of international cooperation. The links between this circle of Belgians and the Interparliamentary Union, where there were many discussions about the viability of an organization to guarantee world peace and cooperation, certainly deserve further exploration. The concerns represented by the new institutions had also arisen during pre-war debates, and were renewed following the impact of global conflict. The aim of cooperation and understanding was, of course, at the forefront, as was the search for rational organization of the economy, with a strong interest in what might contribute to the peaceful resolution of economic conflicts between countries and of labour-capital conflict. Thus, humanitarian, political and economic goals came together in the creation of the International Labour Organization and its permanent secretariat, the International Labour Office.

From their foundation in 1920 until 1940, the League of Nations and the International Labour Office were strongly stamped with both English and French traits, in terms of their staffing, leadership and the way they functioned. Their Geneva headquarters and the strong personalities of some of the senior officials, such as the Frenchman, Albert Thomas, reinforced this. With the recasting of the world order after the second world war, the influence of the United States replaced this Franco-English pre-eminence. This was not, of course, the only change. The action and programme agencies of the new United Nations Organization, which were set up after the United Nations Charter came into force in October 1945, had more resources, experience and willpower than their predecessors. The Economic and Social Council and UNESCO, the bodies that had the most to do with the Urban Internationale, became fully integrated actors in it. The history of this shift also reflects a major change in the history of the Urban Internationale: this was the moment when the urban question became politically visible at an international level. The attitude of the various international organizations was to contribute to its formal recognition.

### *The League of Nations and national privilege*

The Treaty of Versailles, which came into force on 10 January 1920, indicates that a League of Nations should be created and meet for the first time on 16 January. This is not the place to detail the gradual creation of the League's constituent bodies,<sup>[u]32[ux]</sup> or their functions. Instead, we should note those points that highlight convergence between the League of Nations and other parts of the Urban Internationale. A first common point was shared interest in the internationalist cause. A second one related to the League of Nations' general activities, through the various committees that might deal with issues related to the urban situation: for example, the International Committee on Road Traffic Regulation, the Economic Committee, and the Statistics Commission. A third point could be that there were permanent departments of the League of Nations, such as its Health Organization, that were concerned with urban public health as a part of their activities and, during the 1930s, came to have a big investment in the issue of housing. Finally, there were areas where the General Secretariat of the League of Nations might become concerned with a topic because of a recommendation voted by the

General Assembly, as can be seen with the issue of intermunicipal cooperation. This rapid sketch indicates something in itself: that the League of Nations did not have an organic bond with the Urban Internationale, but rather a series of fragmented relationships with various of its associated elements. The 'urban issue' as such was not on the agenda of the first international organization.

Essentially, the League of Nations was to develop these contacts through the UIV, but in a minor way. Although the UIV tried to get involved with the League's services as early as 1922, the latter's response seems to have been delayed until the intermunicipal cooperation resolution taken by the 5th Assembly of the League of Nations, a decision that gave concrete expression to the worldwide efforts that the Cuban, Ruy De Lugo-Vina, had been making since 1921. Even then, Emile Vinck still wrote to the League's Secretariat when he learned in 1923 that the 4th Assembly had put the subject of intermunicipal cooperation on the agenda for the next Assembly. The League's Secretariat, which had been asked by the Assembly to produce a report, then formed ties with the UIV. Meetings took place between Emile Vinck and Harada, the League Secretariat official in charge of compiling the report to be presented to the 6th Assembly, and visits were exchanged between Geneva and Brussels. But these evolving meetings stopped suddenly because of an initial misunderstanding. As the proposal presented to the 4th Assembly of Nations by the Cuban delegation had noted, the motion on intermunicipal cooperation was taken 'in view of the fact that direct relationships between the large municipalities of various countries are a new form of cooperation between peoples, which will make a strong contribution to the spread of the ideals [sic] that defined the creation of the League of Nations and that inspire its activities'.<sup>[u]33[ux]</sup> In other words, this was above all a case of mustering additional support for the League's cause, not of promoting direct exchanges on municipal affairs, as the UIV so fervently desired. Moreover, as the report of the Cuban delegate, Patterson, shows, before the adoption of the proposal, several national delegates expressed 'very restrained and well-founded reservations, inspired by the fear of seeing intermunicipal activities invade the higher sphere of the sovereignty of states'.<sup>[u]34[ux]</sup> This gives us a measure of how far plans for promoting intermunicipal cooperation could be seen as anti-national. Moreover, as things turned out, although the report of the Secretariat was approved by the 6th Assembly of Nations in 1925, no action was taken on it. In fact, this was exactly what Nitobe and Harada, the two Japanese officials in charge of following the matter through, had suggested, when they wrote in 1925 that the League could not go over the heads of its constituent states and that the UIV was not a suitable body to lead the activities envisaged.

After this unhappy start, the UIV nevertheless pursued its quest for recognition by the League of Nations, in order to achieve recognition for the involvement of municipalities in a whole series of problems that the League had to tackle. But, although the UIV was represented on the Standing Committee on Road Traffic from 1927, its demands for a seat on the Economic Consultative Council (Ghebali, 1972), as representing the role of municipalities in the economic life of nations, was ignored by the League. The League seems to have had one fundamental worry: as an interstate organization, it could not give local authorities a legitimacy that might damage the sovereignty of nation-states. This primacy of states was reflected in the way in which the League's specialist services functioned. Thus, when the Health Organization conducted cumbersome surveys on housing in a large number of countries, or when it developed a project for an International Low-Cost Housing Institute from 1937 onwards, it does not seem to have used the associative networks of the UIV, the IF or the IAA. Of course, the methods employed in these surveys need to be more precisely identified, but the general impression is that the Health Organization's services preferred to go through the governmental authorities of each country to put together their data. This was both a way of involving the League in the workings of nations and a strategy for raising

awareness, increasing the chances that the section's work would be remembered later because it had mixed with organizations linked to national governments. But this choice also conceals the fact that the workings of a system of international government were purely administrative, that the role of associations and civil society in general was under-valued, and that recourse to expertise, in the form of appeal to objective third parties, was not envisaged. Consequently, voluntary groupings were not called on for their knowledge or recommendations, but, at best, merely to provide data that the Health Organization's services would transform into knowledge and recommendations.

### *The ILO and the temptation of expertise*

The other international, Geneva-based organization that took an interest in urban subjects was the International Labour Office, the executive arm of the International Labour Organization, whose constitution formed Part XIII of the Treaty of Versailles. The Office specialized in a single theme [---] that of work, which related to city life from several angles. Links were created between the UIV and the International Labour Office around the issues of housing and workers' leisure. The International Labour Office was concerned with the issue of housing from the early 1920s, conducted a major survey on the issue between 1922 and 1928, then joined the League of Nations' Health Organization's survey on urban and rural housing in the late 1930s. It took up the issue of workers' leisure from 1924 onwards, and liaised with the UIV and the IF on both issues.

Before we look at the nature of these links, a major fact should be stressed [---] the closeness of the International Labour Office to reform movements concerned with the issue of housing and the city in general. Within the International Labour Office, a fairly large number of officials had personal connections to this sphere. Chief among these was Albert Thomas, the first Director of the International Labour Office. Within the Socialist Study Groups, an organ of 'intellectual socialism', he took part in discussions on municipal organization that gave rise to a whole series of publications (Rebérioux, 1987; Prochasson, 1993: 122[--]9; Topalov, 1997). Strong ties created during the pre-war period also included those with Edgar Milhaud, professor of political economy in the Faculty of Law at Geneva, editor of the *Annales de la Régie Directe* and, like Mario Roques from the Ecole Normale Supérieure, a member of the Socialist Study Groups. A certain number of foreign socialists, such as Emile Vinck, Belgian correspondent of the *Annales de la Régie Directe*, were linked with this group and the publications masterminded by its members. As Christophe Prochasson has written, this network [---] cemented during the war around Albert Thomas's ministerial work [---] was fairly long-lasting. After the first world war, the creation of international bodies and the appointment of Thomas to head the International Labour Office gave the network's members a chance to re-establish contact and to reactivate their internationalist commitment[u]35[ux] by linking their activities to those of the International Labour Office. Albert Thomas was the Director, of course, but Edgar Milhaud was Head of the International Labour Office Research Division, while Mario Roques was their French correspondent. This makes it clearer why, after 1923, Henri Sellier and Emile Vinck contacted Thomas and Milhaud directly to propose collaborations with the UIV and the IF, to which both of them belonged. However, this closeness was not limited to the 'Francophone' group. Many International Labour Office officials were active in the pre-war social reform movement, in particular around the issue of housing. For example, Karl Pribram, who supervised the International Labour Office's first studies of housing, was the Secretary-General of the Centralstelle für Wohnungsreform in Austria and took part in international housing congresses, including the one at Vienna in 1910, to which he was Secretary. Other connections again, between the International Labour Office's concerns and those of the associations centred around the Urban Internationale [---] especially those linked to political allegiance [---] explained, for example, why the Dutch

socialist, Wibaut, long-standing President of the UIV and President of the IAA, went to Geneva several times to meet Thomas and maintain the associations' relations with the International Labour Office.

Relationships between the International Labour Office and the major associations of the Urban Internationale were just as complex as this might suggest. On the one hand, they were governed by the same ambiguous attitude as noted above in relation to the League of Nations: the International Labour Office, as a new international organization, was permanently seeking support and local or regional bases, and so it made 'strategic' use of the international associations. But [---] completely unlike the League of Nations [---] the International Labour Office was also considering more direct action on urban issues, especially around that of housing.

For the International Labour Office too, it was primarily a matter of using the associations' structures to gather information, to listen to 'practitioners' putting forward their ideas, and to create links with 'top-line specialists'.<sup>[u]36[ux]</sup> Thus, the International Labour Office used congresses to gain information, and this explains why, in the early 1920s, it sent fairly frequent delegations, often of international officials dealing with housing issues. The International Labour Office developed this concept further by calling on the associations' knowledge outside their congresses: they variously asked them to distribute questionnaires to their members, requested a memorandum on a given issue to increase awareness of it among International Labour Conference actors, or [---] more subtly [---] got members of the associations to do some work towards International Labour Office activities. This led to the conclusion of an agreement, in 1925, between the International Labour Office and the UIV in the areas of documentation and scientific knowledge: the main objective of the scientific section was to achieve a uniform approach to statistics on housing, so as to allow international comparisons. There were several meetings on this subject: the UIV was to organize the logistics of the exercise and so mobilized its network to this effect, while organization of the scientific side fell to the International Labour Office, who prepared relevant working documents. By this expedient, the International Labour Office wanted to be able to present proposals for statistical standardization to the International Institute of Statistics, and thus to make its own work on housing easier.

Furthermore, the International Labour Office tried to promote the emergence of an international body specializing in housing, which would be able to provide it with backing, local and regional bases, and information. As early as 1922, when reformers were trying to revive International Housing Congresses by holding one in Rome, Albert Thomas and Royal Meeker were outlining the action that the International Labour Office could take in this sphere. As Thomas said, they could 'try to create, within the International Labour Office itself, the permanent centre that the movement seems to need'.<sup>[u]37[ux]</sup> From then on, the International Labour Office developed an intensive programme of building links with members of the Standing Committee of the International Housing Congresses, in order to put relations between the two on a more systematic footing. Nevertheless, the International Labour Office's financial restrictions limited its ambitions, and the solution of creating a 'centre' within the International Labour Office itself was abandoned in favour of pursuing anything that might promote the development of an international approach to housing. To this end, the International Labour Office seized the opportunity offered by the transfer [---] after lengthy negotiations [---] of the Standing Committee's responsibilities to the IF and by the creation of a 'housing' section within the latter. We have already pointed out that this transfer represented a setback and led to a split, with the creation of the International Housing Association in 1928, headquartered in Frankfurt. Through the intervention of its officials,<sup>[u]38[ux]</sup> its close associates<sup>[u]39[ux]</sup> and its leadership,<sup>[u]40[ux]</sup> the International Labour Office threw all its weight behind the split, assured the Housing group of its interest

and collaboration, and even at one time offered to support the new Association to set up in Geneva. The objectives of the International Labour Office were clearly expressed in Karl Pribram's report of July 1928, just after stormy meetings at the IF's London Congress had confirmed the split. Pribram suggested that, from then on, apart from information exchanges, collaboration should take the form already established in the collaboration with the UIV: setting up 'committees of experts', which would meet regularly to examine structural problems systematically, with the International Labour Office preparing scientific documentation for these meetings. Pribram concluded that, in this way, 'it would be possible for the International Labour Office to exercise considerable influence over the progress of a movement that is destined to play an ever-increasing role in the social policy of the future, without compromising itself in a sphere that is still at the limit of its areas of competence'.<sup>[u]41[ux]</sup>

Throughout this whole situation, it can be seen that the International Labour Office was sketching out a plan for a specific type of relationship between reformer and international official, in which the issue at stake was setting up research structures that would be flexible and close enough to meet the needs of an international institution. Admittedly, this attempt by the International Labour Office to retain the Urban Internationale associations within its expert circles had no real future. The Labour Conferences did not renew the International Labour Office's brief to look at housing, and Thomas's administration had to give up its grand design for the housing sector. However, the inclination remained, since in other respects it was in line with the leanings of the International Labour Office and its first Director towards scientific management and the use of experts<sup>[u]42[ux]</sup> It not only had an effect on the equilibrium of the Urban Internationale, disrupting the relationship of its associated elements; it also marked the appearance of a new institutional element in the relationship, that of international organizations. This point is particularly pertinent in relation to what was to happen just after the second world war around the new structures of the World Order established by Roosevelt's people. This unfinished, rough plan to set up an Urban Internationale to serve global institutions would then be ratified.

### *The logic of NGOs*

The creation of the UN and its subject-based subsidiary organizations was to alter the structure of the Urban Internationale. This profound change did not come about simply through the sudden growth in numbers of new organizations, but also through the impact of the forces they exerted within the two areas we have already looked at. These forces did have a name: the 'Rockefeller Connection', which we have reviewed in detail above.<sup>[u]43[ux]</sup> These were, of course, people who had been through PACH and its subsidiary associations; from 1944<sup>[--]5</sup>, they were to be found in key positions within the new international organizations, as well as at the heart of the process of reorganizing the focus of relations between the associations. Their activities become clearer still when seen as part of a continuous trend towards the internationalization of issues in urban government. From the start of its activities, the 'Rockefeller Connection' had ambitions in this direction, perceptible in the attention it devoted to attracting experts from an increasing number of countries to the meetings it organized in Europe and to its parallel activities in the Americas. This pressure towards internationalization fostered a real interest in the League of Nations and the International Labour Office on the part of the 'Connection'. Visible in the support of various Rockefeller funds for activities in the public-health sector and in the American magnate's financing of the League of Nations' library, this interest was also expressed within Urban Internationale circles by mutual visits (Von Haan to Chicago, Brownlow to Geneva). This is the context in which the Connection's 1936<sup>[--]7</sup> plan to work towards affiliating the Brussels Center to the League of Nations, as invoked in Article 24 of the Convention that created the



League, should also be viewed.[u]44[ux] This was an attempt to ensure that the Rockefeller Connection's efforts would endure, becoming an intrinsic part of the organs of world government. This plan was toyed with in the late 1930s, but abandoned because of the surrounding financial circumstances: as Egger explained, this affiliation would have created complications in relations with German members of the UIV and with German and Italian members of the IIAS.[u]45[ux] These countries provided the associations with a financial contribution equal to that of PACH and its subsidiaries, and were therefore very useful in the short term. At a time when the financial situation was more favourable, just after the second world war, the project was taken up again and brought to fruition.

From 1944, Louis Brownlow was proposing the recreation of a strong Brussels centre, with a World Commission on the Rehabilitation of Cities established there as an international information centre, financed by the major private foundations, staffed by Americans through PACH and linked to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration.[u]46[ux] Emmerich, Charles S. Ascher, Walter Blucher and others connected to PACH went on to develop a more precise strategy around this proposition, which would involve working to link a renewed and more systematically related joint IF/UIV/IIAS organization to the new international institutions. This comprehensive project was gradually put into practice over the period 1946 to 1950, with the first step being to bring the three organizations together in Brussels. But, in parallel, there was a battle for influence within the IF, where the leaders (especially Sir George Pepler and his wife) and a lot of members did not want to give up their autonomy and dug themselves in to resist all those who wanted to bring the IF too close to UNESCO and the UN.[u]47[ux] This battle set in conflict two concepts of the role of an international association and marked [---] as we have already heard from Charles Ascher [---] the end of the era of men of goodwill and their way of organizing things. PACH, supported by the Dutch who were to house the IF's headquarters, wanted an organization capable of responding with the efficiency, competence and flexibility required by international institutions such as UNESCO or the UN (as had been conceived with their American founders) and it decried the IF's social events, civilities and structures under George Pepler's leadership. He and his wife were very reluctant to accept this incursion of the political into a field they believed should be left to disinterested, independent, competent people [---] in other words, those who had kept the IF alive since 1913[u]48[ux]

At the same time, PACH people lobbied intensely within the structures that were designing the new international institutions (preparatory committees, international meetings, joint meetings at the US Department of State). Thanks to the intervention of figures such as Charles Ascher, the IF and the UIV first obtained some minor consultancy work (requests for opinions or surveys), and then some research contracts, on the model of the one signed in August 1947 between UNESCO and the joint IF, UIV and IIAS services, even though these had not yet actually been re-formed.[u]49[ux] Official recognition of the Urban Internationale associations came later. In mid-1948, the UN gave the IF consultancy status, and the UIV was represented at ECOSOC from November 1949. In May 1949, the UN even asked the IF whether it wanted premises in the new headquarters to be built in New York. Charles S. Ascher was a pivotal figure throughout this period of 'contractualization of relations' between the Urban Internationale associations and the new international organizations. Moreover, his activities were not restricted to the associations we are familiar with, but extended across the whole sphere of associations working around housing and urban planning issues. Ascher was also called on by the International Association of Architects to represent it at ECOSOC; he organized a meeting between the Director of UNESCO and the office of the International Modern Architecture Congresses; he sustained the work of the International Federation of Landscape Architects; and he supported the Pacific Asian Conference of Municipalities. As Vice-Chair of the ECOSOC NGOs Conference in 1953, and Chair of the same Conference

from 1962, Charles Ascher went on to systematize contractual relationships between the Urban Internationale associations and the international organizations. These relationships developed throughout the period from 1952 to 1960, in the form of commissions for reports and studies, in areas from North Africa (studies on the renovation of the medina at Tunis in the 1960s) to collaborations with the WHO, the OECD and the World Bank (participating in the preparation of the Bank's road-book at McNamara's request). Inside the institutions, too, lobbying went on to try and get the Urban Internationale's aims recognized. This was achieved, in that housing and town planning became part of the international bodies' programmes [---] for example, at ECOSOC in 1951. To fully understand the change that this strong bond with the international organizations brought about, a more detailed study of the development of the associations' structures and agendas would be needed, but it is evident that the link marked a shift towards specialization and the programmed planning of thematic work, determined by priorities highlighted by the international institutions. Among indicators of the accelerated pace of change arising from the bond between the Urban Internationale associations and the international bodies were the setting-up of permanent subject committees within the IF, the interest in countries with rapidly growing economies, and the creation of new professional organizations such as the International Association of Town Planners, which emerged from the IF in the early 1960s.

## **Conclusion**

Of course, a whole series of questions may arise from this attempt to establish the history of the Urban Internationale. Firstly, as we have already said, the attempt results from a desire to see the international level as a phenomenon that cannot simply be reduced to an extrapolation of national categories. We must certainly consider conflicts whose agents may be embodied or discerned in national positions, just as we must take into account the respective influence of various nationalities within an international association and remain mindful of the positions of strength occupied by certain governments in the interrelationship of world powers, of their foreign policies and of the mark they made on the Urban Internationale. But it is the relationship between the two levels that seems to be the most interesting, adding to what we know about the ways in which the city was perceived and how the tools and actions needed to change it were defined. How did particular internationally defined agendas come to be put forward, and did they, in turn, alter the national agendas of governments and professions? How did different professional groups construct their identity, with regard to what was happening in other countries and at the international level? How did national 'avant-gardes' handle the 'international effect' so as to ensure their own victory on home soil? How were municipal or national public policies as implemented connected with the activities and initiatives of transnational organizations? How did the international sphere create new ways of seeing, classifying and organizing the urban phenomenon throughout the world? How were relations between elected representatives, scholars and professionals organized differently in the different national contexts, and were they transformed by international activities? However, first and foremost, the hypotheses developed above point up some stumbling-blocks and some clear directions, which will now be recapped briefly.

First of all, it is obvious that the real subject to be tackled here is that of universalization, or the way in which ideas, ways of doing and seeing, concepts or even income are transmitted outside the contexts that have generated them, to the point where they gain general recognition. These universalization processes are influenced by a balance of power, even if this is often repudiated or concealed. There is an inequality in intellectual exchange relations, even though this does not always follow absolutely the lines laid down by

inequalities in economic or political exchange. The question here [---] although lying just beneath the surface [---] around the acknowledged ‘structuring power’ of American organizations over the Urban Internationale, is one of domination, of hegemony or American imperialism. It is certain that we need to clear a path around these terms if we are to gain an effective view of the Urban Internationale. But how? The idea of universalization of the whole world from elements forged for and on the domestic scene, such as that developed with clarity and power by Bryan Garth, Pierre Bourdieu or Yves Dezalay[u]52[ux] is seductive; but, equally, it raises questions. Nor am I any more persuaded by denunciations of the Macdonaldization of the world, or by the picture of a natural, neutral and unstoppable ‘globalization’, or by an exposée of the cultural imperialism of the great American foundations (Arnove, 1982).

This is because the influence of American organizations and individuals in the processes I have described above was exerted not so much to the advantage of the ‘United States’ as to the advantage of certain values: institutions and individuals of US origin felt themselves to be the bearers of modernism, flexibility and dynamism, and were working towards their recognition as universal values.[u]53[ux] Acting out of conviction, they began their worldwide campaign in the first decades of the twentieth century, directing it especially at the Old World, which they described as archaic and inflexible. To be more precise, it was directed at elites throughout the world, via a plan to build an international alliance of professional elites to promote a modernization policy during a ‘crisis period’.[u]54[ux] The avatars of the Urban Internationale found a place and a direction for themselves in this context, which was not so much a conflict between nations or civilizations as a struggle between different definitions of the universal [---] in this case around the city and issues relating to it. The conquest of the Urban Internationale by this modernizing model, which promoted expertise, contracts, organizations, information and rational, non-partisan political action, is all the more interesting because it took place in the 1930s, the period when these values were also being imposed in the field of local government, housing and planning in the United States itself. In fact, these values were fairly widely established on the basis of recycled European experience. Indeed, a distinctive feature of the ‘Connection’ project was that its national and international progress were mutually supportive, rather than simply ‘reproducing abroad a strategy that has been tried and tested in the national space’, as Yves Dezalay and Bryant Garth have written of the American foundations’ activities in the sphere of human rights during the cold war (Dezalay and Garth, 1998: 27). This view of transnational exchanges and their complexity is closely akin to some of Anne Rasmussen’s arguments (Rasmussen, 1992: 127). Writing on the international scientific congresses that flourished between 1860 and 1914, she stresses that a hypothesis that disciplines are internationalized through successive enlargements rarely works; she goes on to emphasize the distinctive nature of the milieu and the objectives of international organizations, by comparison with the national associative movement. Thus, transition to the international level was often accompanied by a transfer of the content of congresses or associations, and does not simply boil down to a geographical extension of the issues. The internationalization of the American foundations’ activities [---] and, more broadly, all the international work of the different Urban Internationale actors [---] requires a similar analytical stance: we need to take into account certain constraints and specific properties of the international sphere.

Consequently, the focus of the research on which this article draws has been a universalization project [---] or rather, several concurrent projects, since that was what was really happening. An attempt has been made to reconstruct plan, strategy and tactics (without going to the lengths of finding conspiracies), to follow the hesitations, changes of direction and obstacles encountered by the various projects, and to trace the alliances and conflicts between those sustaining the projects; but also to convey the amendments, compromises and

renunciations involved in building and running a structure such as the Urban Internationale. Indeed, the latter cannot be reduced to the intentions of those who helped to mastermind it, give it shape or organize it. It had a life of its own, a dynamic that went beyond the energies of the people who instigated it. It, in turn, exerted pressure on them and made them change their plans. To succeed in this research, we need to follow trends in international exchanges and to reconstruct the general economy of these exchanges, without relying on synchronies, discrepancies and precedents to infer circulation, imitation or influence. Thus, flows of people, texts and ideas must be traced, in an attempt to reconstruct the organization of these exchanges, definitions of origins, reappropriations and the workings of importation, while also trying to deal with the largest possible number of points through which such exchange passed.[u]55[ux]

In this regard, the road travelled in the preceding pages has a lot of blind spots. The main gap in this analysis is probably the omission of the flows of individuals and information that came together to create the networks of the Urban Internationale. This omission, which Rodgers' work (1998) makes even more evident, is voluntary, yet arises out of circumstances.[u]56[ux] Another indispensable area for further research is the lifespan and activities of the major associations and their constituent elements.[u]57[ux] But, above all, it will certainly be vital to attempt a re-examination of some major contrasts that have implicitly structured the thinking here. One simple example of this would be the terms 'reformer', 'philanthropist', 'scholar' and 'professional' in the sphere of the urban, 'public' (governmental) and 'private' (non-governmental) and the links that usually connect them in our arguments. Thus, the contrast introduced by Helen Meller between unpaid philanthropists and private reformers, on the one hand, and professionals and public-sector activity, on the other, is convincing for the British context (Meller, 1995a; 1995b). But can it be generalized? It should certainly be discussed in light of the activities of the major American philanthropic foundations, whose principles and modes of organization have nothing to do with those of loners like Patrick Geddes, network heads like Paul Otlet, or patrons like William Lever or George Cadbury. In the same way, Raymond Unwin, George Pepler and the eminent IF members of 1945 were certainly professionals, but obviously they were not the professionals whom the Rockefeller organizations wanted to see getting their hands on the urban question. Instead, they wanted to promote PACH people, strongly tied to serving the American Federal state apparatus built by Roosevelt and to the theme of government in general. In short, the boundaries between these groups, categories and concepts have been breached as a result of their removal from the national context onto an international level. But even looking only at America, collaborations and individual and institutional trajectories provide evidence of overlap between reforming activities, academic writing, non-governmental undertakings and participation in the machinery of government. There are many facts that could be used to support this statement, but the person of Charles Merriam is a good example. An unsuccessful yet persistent candidate for Mayor of Chicago in the early years of the century, and alderman of that city, Professor and Chairman of the Department of Political Sciences at the University of Chicago, prolific theoretical author on politics, government and democracy, founder and President of the Social Science Research Council, President of the American Political Science Association, Trustee and President of the Spelman Fund of New York, protector of the 1313 E 60th Street Group, member of President Hoover's 'President's Research Committee on Social Trends', of the National Planning Board created by President Roosevelt (later to be known as the National Resources Committee and National Resources Planning Board), and of the President's Committee on Administrative Management, which reorganized the Federal executive [---] this is just an outline biography of Charles E. Merriam (1874[---]1953). But his life was not unique, and demonstrates the kind of presumptions that would have to be adhered to if we were to establish the boundaries of (and therefore to accept contrasting terms for) the

categories listed above. On the one hand, a transnational view of these issues can make a contribution to questioning distinctions that are nationally or locally relevant but cannot be generally applied from there. On the other hand, another area worthy of investigation is the way the structuring of the Urban Internationale [---] and the values, norms and definitions that came into confrontation and were shifted within it [---] contributed to defining these categories, precisely because the need to establish them lay at the heart of the different and opposing universalization projects.

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